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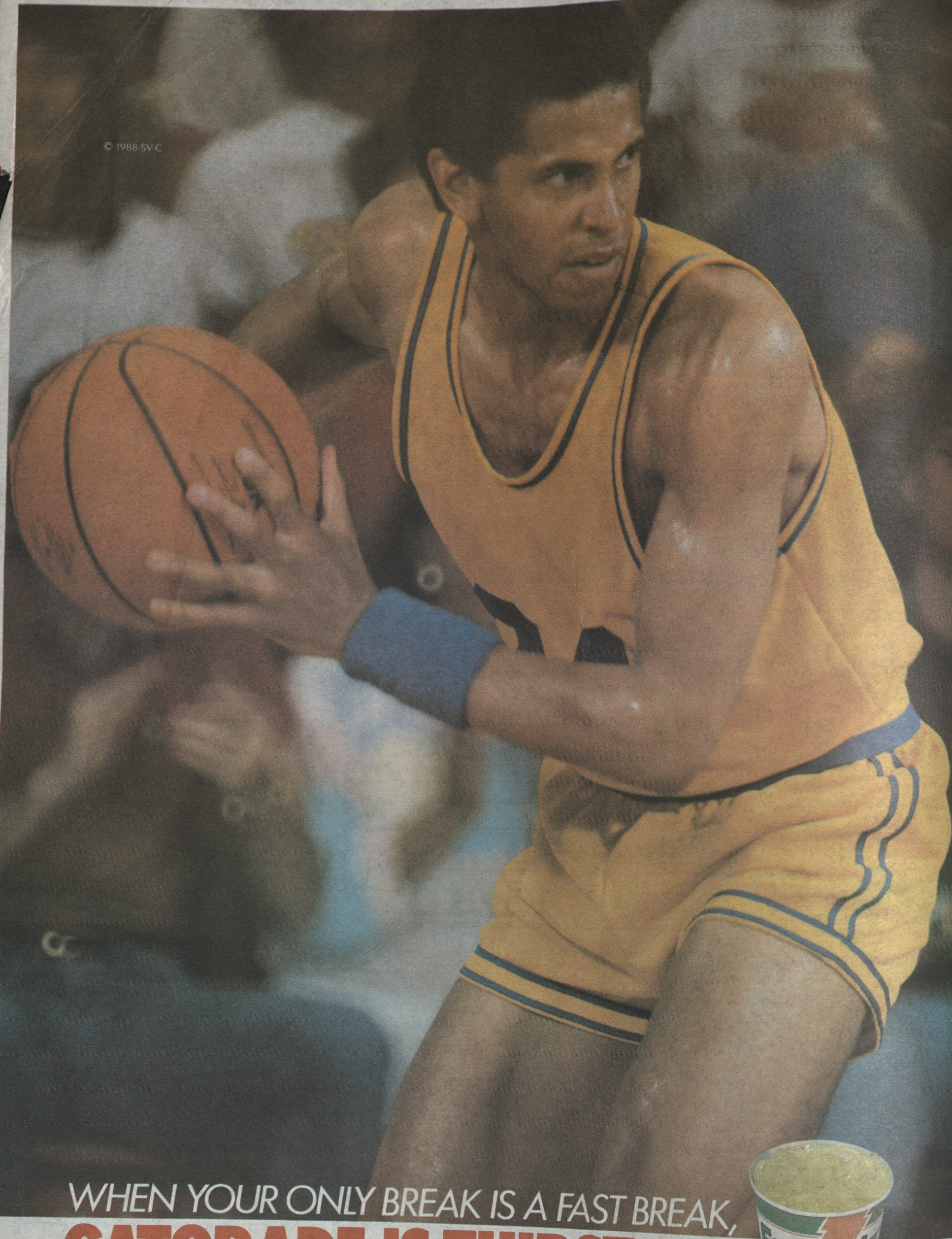
Volume 4, Issue 5
January 31, 1989
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KIM GARWOOD
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*“Hail to
the Chief”*

At Home with Mark Acres

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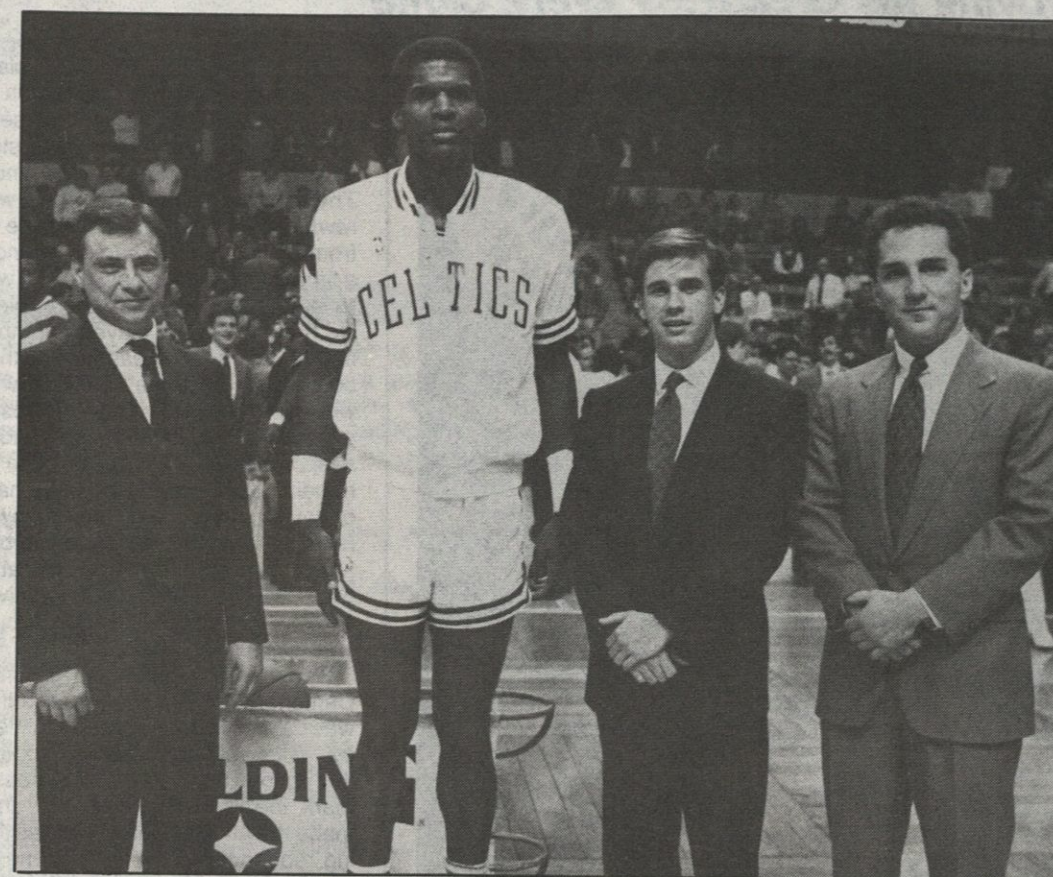


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BOSTON CELTICS PRIDE

Robert Parish Named "Gatorade/Celtics Pride Player-of-the-Month"



Rick Mattoni, Robert Parish, Tom Fox and Mark Lev during Presentation

This season, Celtics Pride and Gatorade are proud to be co-sponsoring the Gatorade/Celtics Pride Player-of-the-Month Award presented to the player who contributes the most to the overall success of the team.

At halftime of the December 7 game vs. the Atlanta Hawks, Robert Parish was honored as November's Player-of-the-Month. During that month, Robert averaged 17 points and 11 rebounds per game while leading the Celtics to their 61st consecutive month of winning basketball.

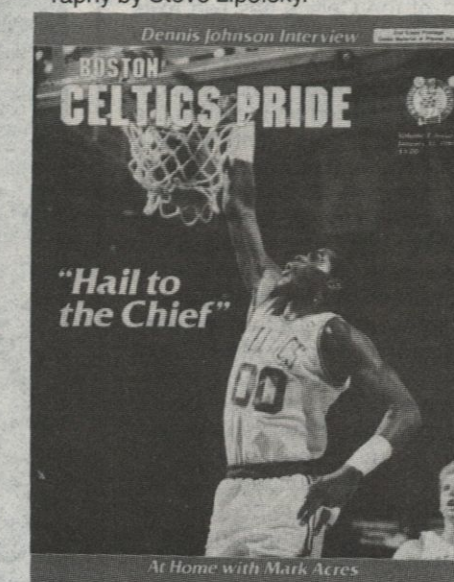
As part of this award, Robert received a cellular telephone courtesy of Bay State Cellular Telephone, and, in addition, Gatorade and Celtics Pride will be donating a check in the amount of \$500 to Robert's favorite charity, The 65 Roses Foundation.

Pictured above with Robert are: Rick Mattoni, President of Bay State Cellular Telephone (far left); Tom Fox, Manager of Sports Marketing for the Quaker Oats Company (second from right); and Mark Lev, Director of Advertising for Celtics Pride.

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 5
 NUMBER 65
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Cover...

Robert Parish has labored for years in one of the toughest positions to play in basketball. This year, his contributions are nothing short of incredible. Cover photography by Steve Lipofsky.



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 Billed recently as the best center in the NBA, by USA Today, Robert Parish has dominated play in the paint all year long.

8 At Home with Mark Acres
 Newly settled newlyweds Mark and Veronique Acres have just begun to enjoy their surroundings in Boston and also in America as a whole for Belgian-native Veronique.

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 Jim Paxson, who's minutes vary from night to night is looking to contribute from a number of positions on the team. His veteran perspective provides a settling influence on the youngsters surrounding him.

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All photography in this magazine is shot on Kodak film.

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JANUARY 31, 1989



Best in the Business

Robert Parish: Proving his Greatness Every Game

By Bob Schron

It's safe to say that Robert Parish, the thirty-five year old Center of the Boston Celtics is a mysterious figure. He is probably the most popular teammate on the Celtics because, as he says "I'm not a threat to anybody." Yet to the press most game nights he's an invisible man. The locker room of the Celtics has two exits and Parish often escapes into the night by the time reporters arrive.

On the basketball floor Parish's attributes shine. Unassuming on the offensive end, Robert is still the seventh leading active scorer in the league, trailing Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Moses Malone, Alex English, Adrian Dantley and Larry Bird. More importantly, Parish is sixth on the active list in Play-off competition. With so many great teammates Parish's contributions often go unnoticed. One afternoon after practice last season reporter Mike Fine of the Quincy Patriot-Ledger spent fifteen minutes with the great Center, confronting him with a stark fact: Parish's field goal attempts had shrunk to seven per game and his play had been suffering (as had the team's during a 2-2 November slump). Parish had become a forgotten man.

"But..." commented Washington Bulletin guard Darrell Walker, "If you think the Celtics are even close to the same team without Robert Parish, forget it. He gives them everything. Defense, Rebounding, Intelligence. The ability to score under pressure."

Last season after his final game as Celtics' coach K.C. Jones was asked to select a player who best personified the Jones era, his answer was firm; "Robert Parish" Jones said. "He was the man who made it all go. He sacrificed his game in individual areas in order to make the team concept succeed."

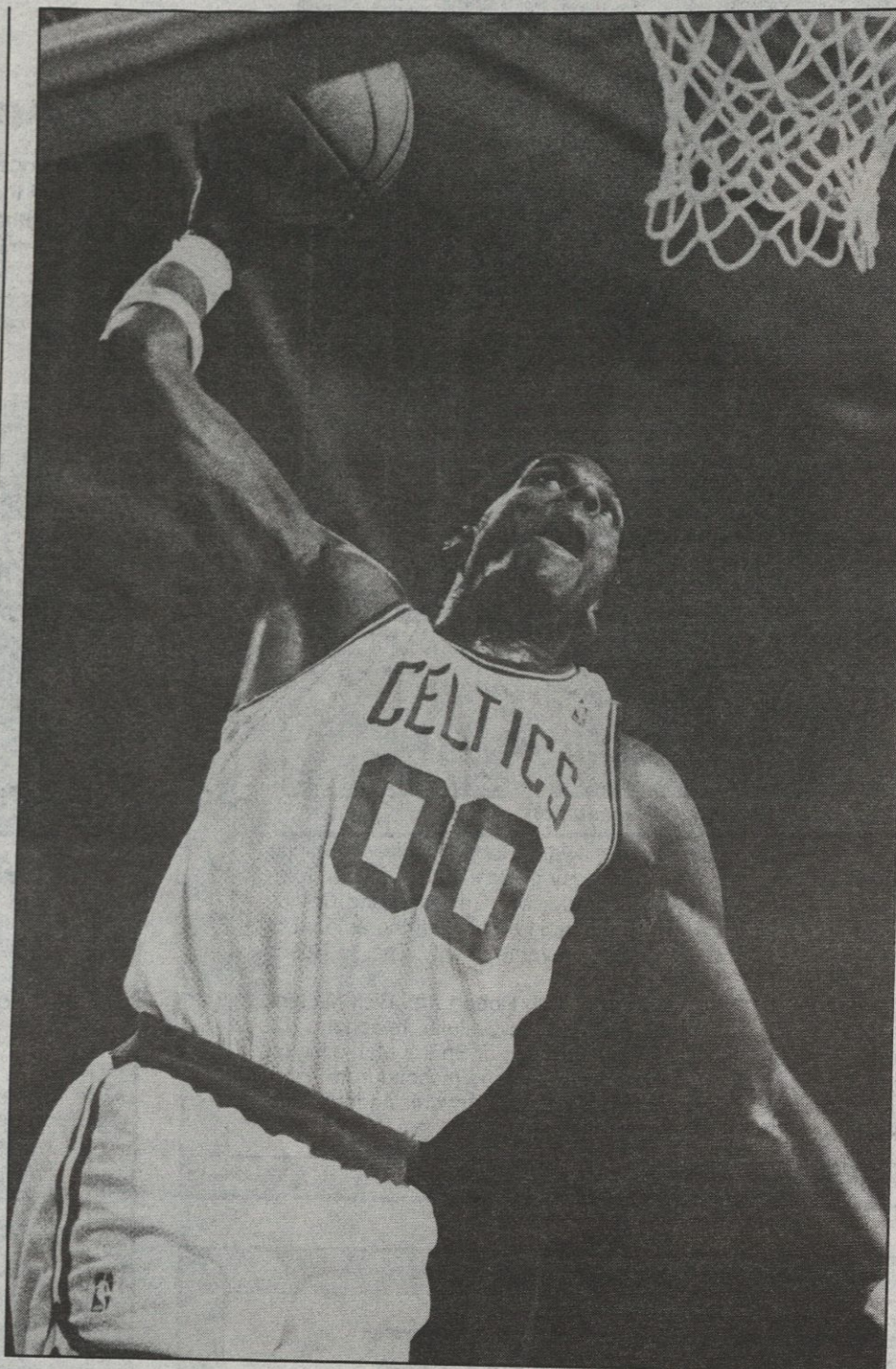
Bird's absence (this season) has profoundly altered Parish's offensive role.

"He was the man who made it all go. He sacrificed his game in individual areas in order to make the team concept succeed."

...K.C. Jones

The seven-footer has tallied a season-high of 34 two times and he has averaged 18.9 ppg on .573 shooting. His shooting accuracy was fourth in the league at the turn of the new year (He finished second last year in shooting percentage with a .589 mark, second to McHale). However in 1987-88 Parish tried ten shots a game. This season he is averaging 13.7 attempts and is the focal point of the Celtics' half-court game. Observers have taken notice of Parish's luminosity this season but to opponents such as Walker and James Donaldson, of the Dallas Mavericks, Parish's impact isn't a surprise but merely another pearl on a string of impact-creating games.

"I'm not surprised at all that he's playing this well at (age) 35. He's always been one



Robert Parish: MVP Season

to take care of himself and if you do that you can play as long as you want.

"I've always ranked Robert in the top five centers. You have Moses and Kareem and Akeem Olajuwon and I think you put Robert in that class. He's been a great player, but he's had great players around him, so you didn't hear as much about Robert as maybe you should have. Robert's up there with the best. He just doesn't have the flash of the other centers. But he works hard and the people that have to play against him know what he can do."

Parish is lean but muscular. Off the floor he's the one in the locker room who sustains a tension-freeing atmosphere with infectious laughter. Though he's a veteran, he's nevertheless regarded as a friend by younger players such as Reggie Lewis, Brian Shaw and Kevin Gamble.

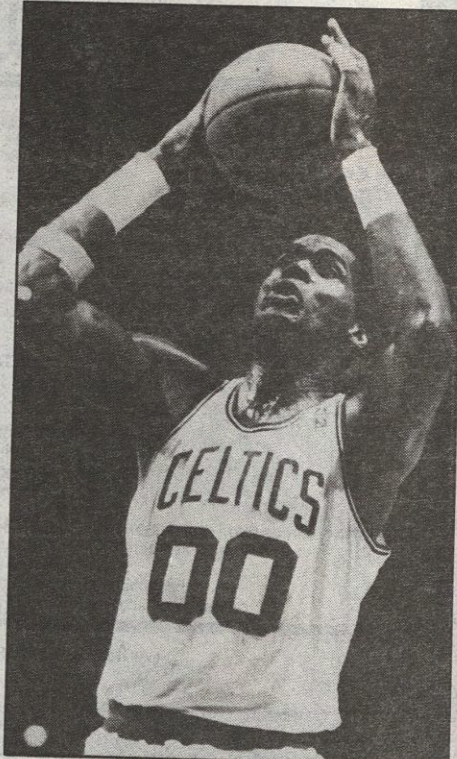
Recently though, Parish has left both practices and games by himself. He's a private person, a self-professed loner.

had a bad rap—that I couldn't play team ball or that I wasn't able to play in the low post. I always thought of myself as a winner and when I came to Boston it all worked out (titles in 1981, 1984, and 1986). The success we had under K.C. was very rewarding and he was a welcome change from Bill Fitch. Fitch served a function for a time but he didn't know when it was time to let up. It's very satisfying to play here; we haven't always played championship ball for a number of reasons and there can be criticism because of it. But when you win all the time as we have in Boston, the expectation levels are higher too. This season has been tough but I've tried to remain positive at all times. We have a lot of young players and I see it now as my responsibility to lead by an upbeat example. I remember when we lost at Golden State. We were always so negative. I just told myself I wouldn't ever go through that type of situation again."

Parish was a First team All America at Centenary in 1976 but because the team was on probation, he received little publicity. This veil has seemed to trail him throughout his career. This season will mark the eighth consecutive time he's made the All-Star Game. He was the leading rebounder in the 1984 game with fifteen and later that season his 14 point-17 rebound game in Game 7 of The Finals sparked Boston to their title win over Abdul-Jabbar and Los Angeles. Similar play-off heroics followed. His collaboration with Bill Walton sparked the team in the pivot to the 1986 title and in 1987 he was brilliant in series wins over Milwaukee and Detroit despite playing with an injured shoulder and a severely sprained ankle.

This season is a mirror image of 1982, when he was arguably the league's Most Valuable Player. In Bird's absence he has averaged 19.9 ppg and 10.9 rebounds to go with 192 blocks. This season his powerful array of offensive moves have returned. Perhaps for the final time, since Parish is nearing the retirement he says may take place in 1991.

Robert's been doing it all



One of Robert Parish's prized possessions is a large fish tank with brilliantly colored tropical fish. Parish once described his favorite pastime as coming home after games and unwinding by watching the fish for "perhaps hours at a time."

If Parish were to be able to watch his own career unfold before him, what would this great player see? Who is this man who embodies a multitude of basketball emotions and yet retains the enormous discipline to play at an exceedingly high level behind a dispassionate mask of intense concentration?

"I think the turning point of my career came when I was traded to the Celtics (in 1980). I had been with the Warriors and it was a deteriorating situation. We played individual basketball at first with guys like Phil Smith and John Lucas handling the ball all the time. They got all the publicity and they were good players but they were guards. I don't think you can really build a championship team with only guards. I

ASK RED



By Red Auerbach

EDITORS NOTE: "Ask Red Auerbach" is a regular feature of Celtics Pride. If you have a question for Red, please send it to Celtics Pride, 49 Locust Avenue, New Canaan, Connecticut 06840. Red will answer as many as possible in each issue.

QUESTION: Did the great Dave Bing ever play for the Celtics?

Matthew Thompson, St. Albans, W. Va.

RED'S ANSWER: Dave Bing most certainly did play for us. Unfortunately for us, however, it was for only one season, the 1977-78 season, which was one of the most dismal years in Boston Celtics history. You are not understating his talent when you called Dave Bing "great", by the way. After an All-American college career at Syracuse, where he averaged 24.8 points over his three varsity seasons, Dave was the first overall pick in the 1966 NBA Draft, going to the Detroit Pistons. He was the NBA Rookie of the Year in 1967 and the league's leading scorer in 1968. After nine years with the Pistons, he was traded to the Washington Bullets in 1975; he played two years with the Bullets before finishing out his career with the Celtics. Dave Bing was a 7-time NBA All-Star, winning the All-Star Game MVP Award in 1976. He averaged at least 20 points per game in the first seven years of his career, and averaged at least double figures in scoring every year he played. He was one of the greatest guards of his time, possibly of any time. Although he was obviously at the end of the line when he played for us, he had a very good season, averaging 13.6 points over 80 games. Dave's last game was also John Havlicek's last — April 9, 1978. I remember very clearly that Dave and John, two of the best to ever play the game, hugged as John came off the court for the final time. I was fortunate enough to have been able to have seen Dave Bing very early in his basketball career, since he went to high school at Spingarn High School in Washington, D.C., near my home. Dave, incidentally, has been a very successful businessman in his adopted town, Detroit, since his retirement as a player; he is the President of Bing Steel Company in that city.

QUESTION: I have heard a rumor that when Larry Bird returns from his operation he is going to be traded. Is this true? And if it is, how long do you think it will take to put the Celtics back on top?

Stephen Pchinow, Elmira, N.Y.

RED'S ANSWER: I am getting sick and tired of all the rumors about all the trades we're suddenly going to make. No, we are not going to trade Larry; I have no intention of ever trading a guy like him. In fact, I'm not planning on trading anyone, despite the Boston media's almost daily headlines about all the deals that are supposedly swirling around our offices. We are not panicking; we're missing one of the best players in the game, and we are adjusting to a new style of play. But we're not going to respond to a few losses by trading away a great nucleus of players. Very often, Jan Volk or I get calls from other teams offering a deal for one of our guys; even though we might immediately reject the offers that are made to us, if the media finds out about the discussions they can make it appear as if we were shopping players around. That lends a credibility to discussions that really had none. We are not going to make any drastic changes based on the first quarter of the 1988-89 season; we are confident that we can compete at the highest level with the players we have.

QUESTION: When you coached the Celtics, didn't you continue to reside in the Nation's Capital?

Mildred Burnett, Columbia, Md.

RED'S ANSWER: Yes. In fact, I've maintained a home in Washington, D.C. ever since I graduated from George Washington University in that city in 1940. For all the years I coached, I really didn't get that much chance to spend time in Washington, but I wanted my wife to have a stable place to raise our two children. Since I retired from coaching in 1967, I've been able to spend a great deal more time in Washington, dividing my time more or less equally between the two cities.

QUESTION: How many times have the Celtics and the Lakers met in the NBA Finals and who won in those meetings?

Theodore E. Renaud, Jr., Greenfield, MA

RED'S ANSWER: The Lakers and the Celtics have met in the NBA Finals a total of 10 times, with the Celtics winning the first 8 and the Lakers the last two. Here's the run-down on our Finals confrontations with the Lakers:

Year	Winner (Coach)	Loser (Coach)	Games
1959	Boston (Auerbach)	Minneapolis (Kunda)	4-0
1962	Boston (Auerbach)	Los Angeles (Schaus)	4-3
1963	Boston (Auerbach)	Los Angeles (Schaus)	4-2
1965	Boston (Auerbach)	Los Angeles (Schaus)	4-1
1966	Boston (Auerbach)	Los Angeles (Schaus)	4-3
1968	Boston (Russell)	Los Angeles (van Breda Kolf)	4-2
1969	Boston (Russell)	Los Angeles (van Breda Kolf)	4-3
1984	Boston (Jones)	Los Angeles (Riley)	4-3
1985	Los Angeles (Riley)	Boston (Jones)	4-2
1987	Los Angeles (Riley)	Boston (Jones)	4-2

QUESTION: Does Reebok pay Danny Ainge some sort of royalty for the use of the name "Lamar Mundane", Danny's imaginary childhood friend, in its new sneaker commercial about the playground basketball legend of the same name?

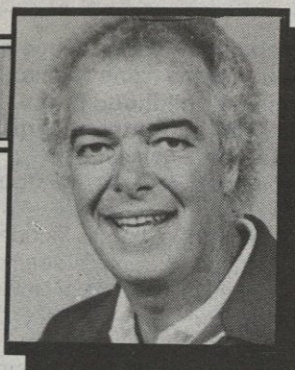
John Rosania, Hartford, Ct.

RED'S ANSWER: Actually, John, Lamar Mundane is not a fictional childhood friend of Danny's at all, but a real basketball legend in the playgrounds of New York; at least, that's what I'm told. But Danny has taken to extending that legend all by himself. At most of our practices, Danny can be found wearing his Lamar Mundane "uniform", which includes a headband and a jersey with Lamar's name on it. He then practices "raining 35-footers out of the sky", as the commercial says. No, Reebok does not pay Danny for the use of the name, since it's not his to sell, but they do, of course, pay Danny (and Dennis Johnson and several other Celtics) for the advertising value of having the players wear their shoes.

QUESTION: Different magazines and newspapers have said different things about Spud Webb. I've seen him listed as being 5-8, 5-5 1/2 and 5-7. What is Spud Webb's true height?

Elizabeth Gouveia, Taunton, Mass.

RED'S ANSWER: The Atlanta Hawks 1986-87 Media Guide lists Anthony (did you know that was his first name?) Webb as being 5-7 and 135 pounds. But I think you're missing a point even asking the question. The fact is that no matter how tall this guy is, he can really play basketball. He has the ability, with his incredible speed, to change the pace of a game when he comes in. In an era when the big emphasis is on big and tall players, Spud Webb has proven that speed is another asset to be considered. And with his ballhandling skills and his amazing jumping ability, he has made himself into a very valuable member of a very good team. Now I think that other NBA teams will start looking for physical attributes beyond just height for potential draft choices.



COACH'S CORNER

By Jimmy Rodgers

Unpredictability

Last week I stood before the Boston press as we prepared to take off to the West for a four game road trip. We had had a six day break from our schedule, a stretch in which we had played very well. We defeated the Jazz, Lakers and Knicks at home and we felt that all of the work we had put into building our team was really beginning to pay dividends.

I told the media that day that we were confident about going out on the road at this point of the season. We thought—and continue to think that teams like Denver and Dallas are excellent tests for a team like ours. We are building a new unit here, but even though some of the players are young (Brian Shaw, Reggie Lewis, Brad Lohaus and Mark Acres), we still continue to believe that we have a very competitive

of explanation, they are derived from our team's inability to develop a consistency, night-in and night-out in terms of both what we can expect from our rookies as well as our veterans. Defensively, we played at an exceptionally high level against the Lakers, Knicks and in spots, against the Cavaliers at home. But when we went to Denver, we fell out of it and they were able to score too many points off of their break. In the subsequent games against Dallas, San Antonio and back east against the Knicks, our defense improved, but we had breakdowns in other areas.

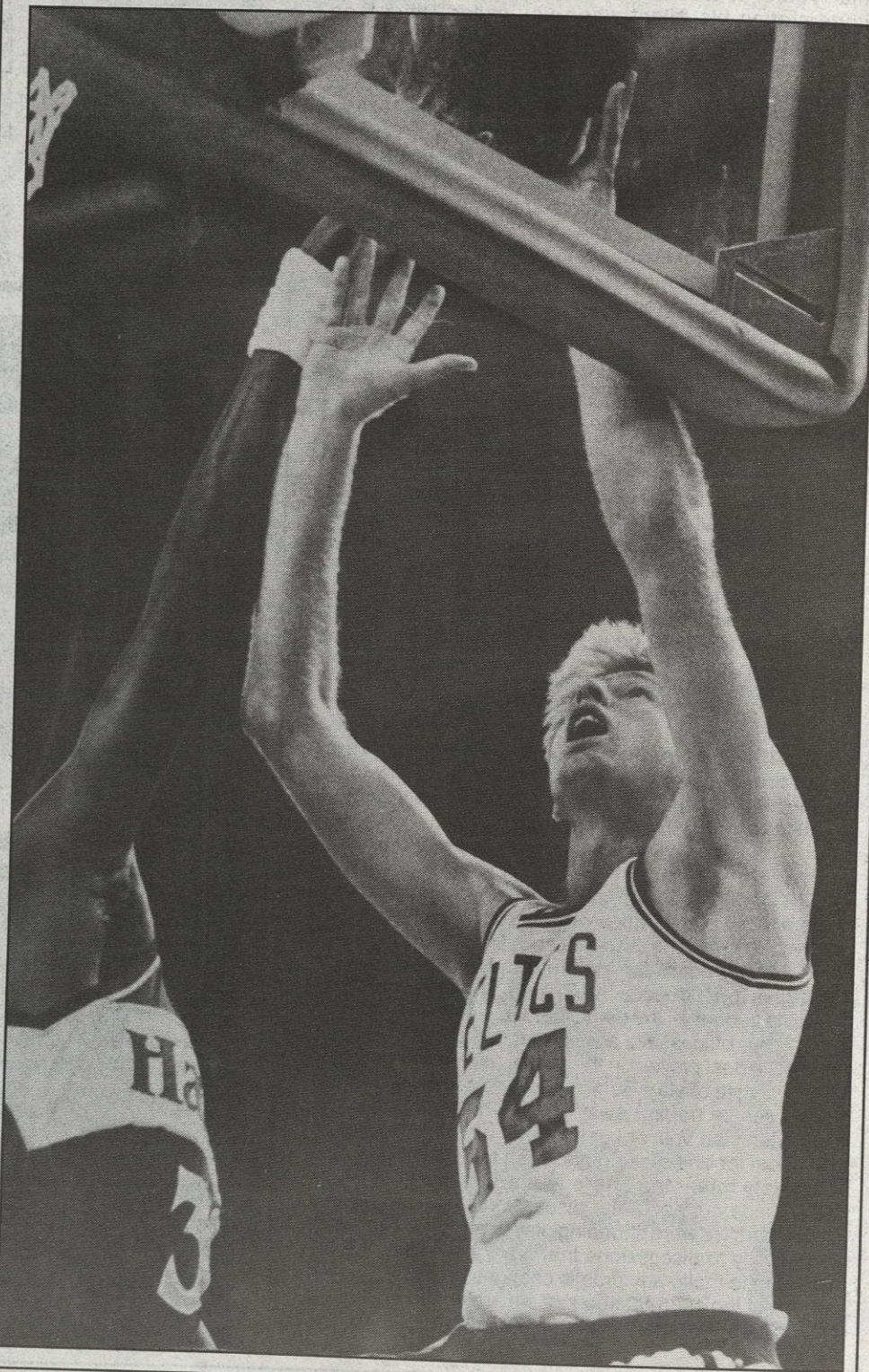
Partly this is due to finding the right combinations to put out there, for example, to press defensively, or to protect the lead down the stretch. This is due partly to young players making mistakes due to inexperience. It is also partly due to players trying to play with injuries.

THE RIGHT CHOICE. At the risk of being redundant, we nevertheless did find a good working solution to both gaining and protecting the lead in our wins in December. We utilized a running, pressing game to push out to a lead. Then we brought in our veteran unit to play careful, error-free ball. Yet, when we went back to this later, the results were not predictable. Obviously it's ludicrous at this level to assign blame to any one player (because there are too many things that add up in

tion. He struggled enough that we thought it best to start Reggie for awhile in substituting. We had been using Reggie as the Sixth Man with considerable success and he's done well as a starter, also. But in terms of finding a stable rotation, we remained uncertain.

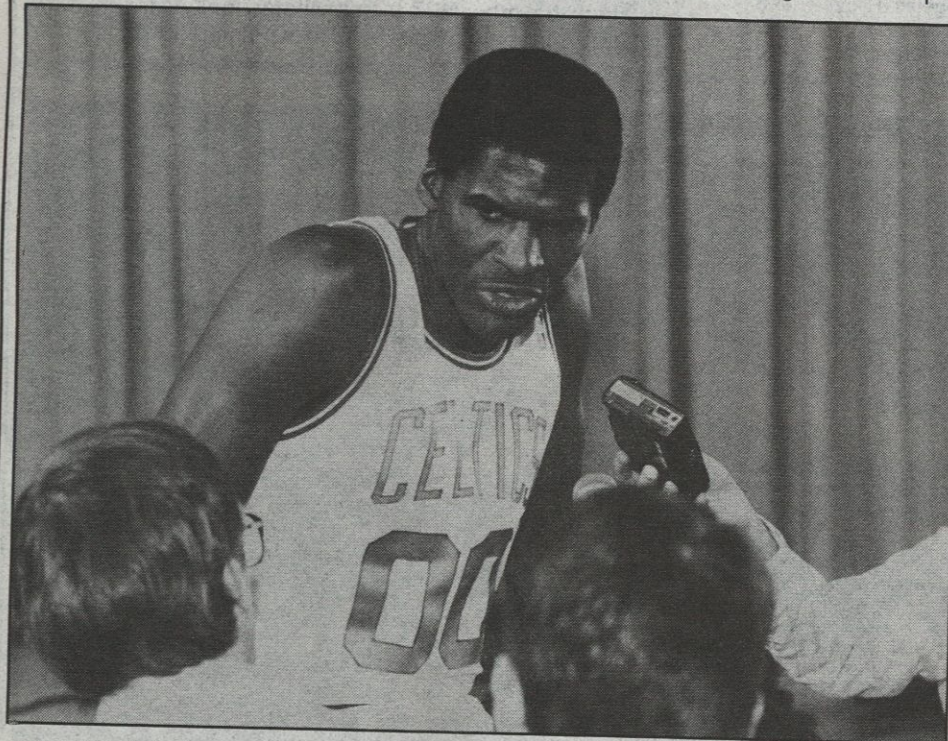
Brad watched for a long time against Phoenix but then came in late in the third quarter and gave us a tremendous lift. We do have that two-tiered purpose, of course; we do want to see Brad develop in the long term and when he is improving he is obviously helping our ballclub. But the problem is we're still not sure of the young player's output night in and night out. The same thinking applies to Brian Shaw: Overall, he's a jewel. But on our team, there's an element of uncertainty about a young player that we can't really have when we're contending.

Brad Lohaus: Still Learning, Still Trying



INJURIES. This has further contributed to the unpredictability of our team. First Larry went out with the bone spurs and then, DJ was bothered with his Achilles tendon problems. We were forced to limit Dennis's minutes and this in turn did create some instability among the players on the veteran unit. Robert has been a horse all year and it's undoubtedly because of him that we've played as consistently as we have. But he suffered an injured knee against Phoenix, too.

So where are we? We dropped five of six during the New Year and after looking at films and trying to reach the root cause of our problem, we are having difficulty finishing wins off. For example: Losing a seventeen point lead to the Knicks in the second half and being defeated in overtime, 109-107. For example: Losing a seven point lead late against Phoenix back in Boston January 4th in a 106-104 loss. It's a difficult period for our basketball team: We continue to try and find an identity as a team in the midst of change and in a very competitive basketball league.



Robert Parish: Tremendous Contributions

team for the immediate present. Robert Parish, Kevin McHale, Dennis Johnson and Danny Ainge, for example, represent a nucleus which has been through high-pressure situations. We believe we are on the borderline of resuming our contender status in the league. Yes, we need Larry Bird back; but I have to think that we can compete with teams like Denver and Dallas on our way back. Even if we are taking a step back in the interests of long term development (i.e., perhaps letting the kids play through some of their mistakes), we persist in setting our goals high.

We hoped for better results on the road. But we took a downturn.

The problems are complex, but by way

the course of a forty-eight minute game). Also, Dennis Johnson and Robert Parish have played injured and this also has thrown our rhythm off. We appreciate the effort in the latter two instances and that's the more important point to make. But also: we just haven't gotten enough consistency out of various units. So we've continually gone back to the drawing board, constantly seeking out the right combination.

INEXPERIENCE. Unpredictability unfortunately goes with the territory of the young athlete. We've talked before of the difficulties Brad Lohaus has had in attempting to learn the small forward posi-

NOTES AND QUOTES

By Jim Rucidlo

"Larry Bird is the master of the unexpected. Without him the Celtics seem so predictable. He can make other players do things they didn't know they could do. Wait until he comes back and you'll see the Celtics young players doing things they never thought to do."

—Johnny Most

Call it a testament to character, call it what you will, but when the Phoenix Suns' cleaned house after drug and gambling allegations rocked the team, they kept only one player — Jeff Hornacek. Every other player who began the 1986-87 campaign as a Sun, through one avenue or another, has made his way out of Phoenix.

What at first glance seemed to be a firesale, i.e., James Edwards to Detroit for Ron Moore and a second-round draft pick or Larry Nance and Mike Sanders to Cleveland for Kevin Johnson, Mark West and Tyrone Corbin, now looks like a series of orderly personnel moves as Phoenix challenges the Lakers for the top spot in the Pacific division.

"I don't like the three-referee system," a veteran NBA official opined recently. "It takes us out of the game."

He explained: "There are certain calls we might let go by, calls we have learned not to make through experience. For instance we might let some pushing go by when players fight for position down low."

"Now, though, when we are on top of the play and we don't make that call an official away from the play is calling the foul. The players involved are turning and looking at me and saying, 'What the...?' They're confused."

"Another thing is we added 18 new officials this year which is having a profound impact on how the game is called. In any other year, we may have added one or two new officials."

"Honestly, I think basketball at any level, high school, college, or pro, can be officiated fine by two referees."

Boston was the NBA's top travelling road show last season averaging 18,631 fans at each of its away games, including 37 sellouts which was also an NBA high mark.

Chicago, which averaged 16,460 at each of its away games, and the Lakers, with 35 away sellouts, came closest to the Celtics standards.

"I think it's fairly obvious why the Celtics and Lakers are struggling this year," said former Laker forward Kurt Rambis. "The Celtics miss their leader and are struggling as a result."

"You can't lose a player of Larry's caliber and expect to stay on the same plane."

"The Lakers are struggling because of the pressure brought on by winning back-to-back championships. You have fatigue and age on every team that stays on top. Night in and night out the Lakers are dealing with playing against teams who play like it's the only game of the season for them."

"Right now the Celtics have players who are trying to pick up Larry's slack rather than playing their own game. That's hurting everybody. With a player like Bird out you just can't expect to maintain the status quo."

"You can't lose your quarterback and expect the backup to come in and for things to be the same even though your team is still running the same plays."

Celtics assistant coach Lanny Van Eman recently was voted into the Wichita State University "Shockers" Hall of Fame for his diligent efforts as a point guard from 1958 to 1962. Called "one of the finest point guards in Shocker history," Van Eman ranks 21st in career scoring and second in career free throw shooting.

Van Eman's prowess, however, extended from the hoop court to the baseball diamond where he was a first-team All-Missouri Valley Conference selection as a shortstop. He also played professionally with the New York Yankees organization in 1962.

Atlanta Hawks forward Antoine Carr was one of six other WSU athletes along with Van Eman voted into the WSU Hall of Fame this year.

"All of us here are used to winning," said Robert Reid of the Charlotte Hornets. "It's hard when you come into a town and you read their newspapers and they're saying 'here comes an expansion team,' like it means a sure win for the home team. We're a better team than that and we're not used to seeing that kind of press. It gets us down."

"You have to have people you can put in the game — you need weapons," Clippers' coach Gene Shue explained. "Greg Kite is an important player for us. He's an all-out defensive player. You know how bad we miss Danny (Manning). You need players that can hold you together and Kite has done that for us. I know it's tough for you people here in Boston to understand because he never played when he was here, but Greg Kite was a starter for us. I don't know if that tells you where we are at."

TAKE PRIDE IN THE TRADITION!

THE BIRD ERA

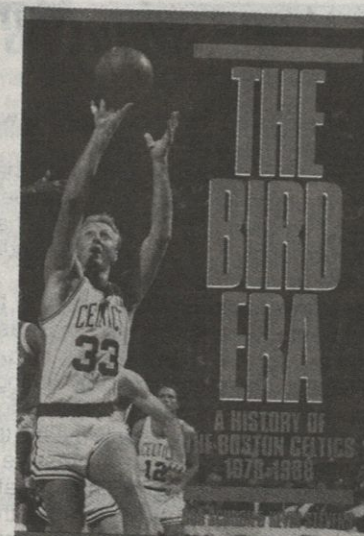
A History of the Boston Celtics 1978-1988

By Bob Schron and Kevin Stevens

A journey through that golden decade, through the highs and lows of the latest version of the Celtics dynasty.

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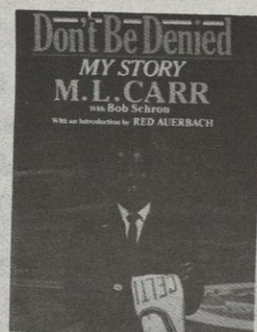
also available . . .

DON'T BE DENIED: MY STORY by M.L. Carr with Bob Schron

A thorough look at professional basketball and M.L. Carr's career with the Celtics. Plus, an inside look at M.L.'s life — his personal and professional struggles and achievements. The story of a real winner!

REBOUND: An Autobiography of K.C. Jones and An Inside Look at the Champion Boston Celtics by K.C. Jones with Jack Warner

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Just Settling In

At Home with Mark and Veronique Acres

By Bob Schron

It's a long and winding road for Mark Acres from his new home in Quincy to the Celtics' practice site at Hellenic College in Brookline outside of Boston. Yet, there's a faint touch of familiarity for the 6'10" center-power forward; this is the man who played his scholastic ball in Palos Verdes, California and then played in Europe for two years before finally making the grade with the National Basketball Association in the fall of 1987. Acres' career indeed has been a long, twisting journey—from his origins looking out over the Pacific, onto Oral Roberts as a collegiate and over the ocean to Belgium where he played European ball. The young player of twenty-five already has the wisdom and perspective of a veteran, even in his second season.

"Yes, I began to wonder if I'd ever get a shot at making the NBA. The key to that thinking was being forced to play the second year in Europe. Usually, if you have to play in Europe, it's for one year. But I have the same attitude about everything I do in basketball: Go out and play the hardest you can, one day at a time. Finally in the summer of 1987, Jan Volk (the Celtics' Executive Vice-President and General Manager) called my Dad and set up a tryout for me at the Celtics' rookie camp. It's hard to say how you do in that type of situation, but when they invited me back for the veteran camp, I knew there was hope.

"I had already signed a contract for a third season in Europe and the money was guaranteed. But I gave that up (although that didn't necessarily mean my career over there was finished). I was determined to give the NBA a solid, definitive shot. Dallas (the team that originally drafted him) didn't really give me that opportunity. I was going to make an NBA team cut me and take my chances after that."

As it turned out, the Celtics did not release him. "I was fortunate and that's all part of it—being in the right place at the right time. Bill Walton was out for the season and Kevin McHale started the regular season on the Injured Reserve. Needless to say, I'm extremely happy here."

During Acres' two seasons in Europe he met Veronique (They were married during the All-Star break in 1987). She is a Belgian citizen and she speaks with a decided accent, although her command of the English language is very strong. She was a volleyball player in the European league as a student at the Louvain La-Neuve there and the two met through a mutual acquaintance, one of Mark's teammates. They began dating and became serious during the player's final season in Belgium.

Veronique related some of the stories of their courtship (The couple spoke with Celtics Pride from their home which overlooks Boston Harbor, a ninth floor condominium that affords an expansive vista of the town). "I had to remain in Belgium to finish up school. I received my degree in Film. But even though we were separated for four months while Mark was in the States during the team's rookie camp, I

knew we would be together again. He was calling me virtually every day."

"I hadn't the slightest premonition that I would ever be married to a European woman," said Mark. "Everything that happened obviously has worked out wonderfully. We're very happy in Boston."

The conversation moved along to the adjustments Veronique has made as a newcomer to the United States culture. The States are a considerably younger nation than her homeland. "But I don't think that that fact necessarily means that the people here are more expressive or liberal. Perhaps the people in the States are trying to hold on to the history that they already have, because I think that people (generally) are more conservative in the United States than they are in Belgium. It's pretty much the same whether we've been

cause the exhibits change frequently." They also like concerts. They recently watched Keith Richards perform in Boston. She handles the cooking and is an "excellent" chef according to Mark. She watched her mother cook back home and although she didn't prepare meals for her original family, the lessons were absorbed. She prepares seafood, quiches, flammes and a general cuisine.

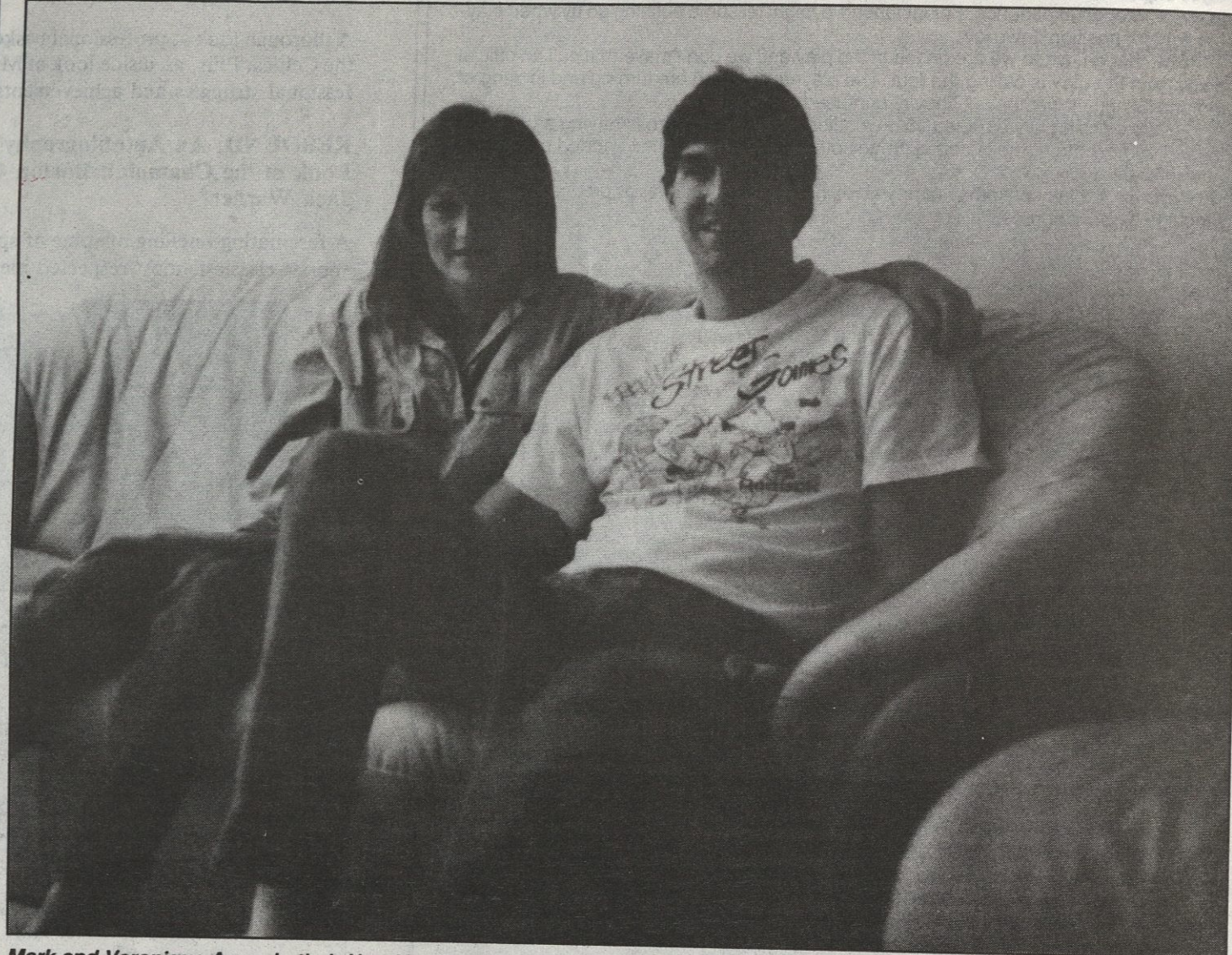
The couple have enjoyed the Celtics' family. "I think we have a tight bunch of guys and their families are close," remarked the player. The Acres socialize mostly with the younger players and their families because the veterans and their wives are mostly on their young children's schedule. They visited with Reggie Lewis and his girlfriend recently (Lewis lives nearby).

rotations. Sometimes when a player is playing well you can't take him out.

"Even if there are stretches where I don't play that much, I still keep in good shape. We practice hard and I'm always going up against solid competition in practice. You just hang in there."

"The emotion comes and goes," said Veronique. "Naturally I'll become more involved when Mark's in there. During the playoffs last season I lost my voice. It was all extremely exciting."

The couple decided to purchase their home after Mark signed a two year contract before the season started. Recently they hosted Mark's parents and his brother over the Christmas holiday. Dick Acres coached Mark in college and his scrutinizing eye gave the son a good evaluation when he watched the Celtics' wins over



Mark and Veronique Acres in their New Home.

in Los Angeles or in Boston. Oh, there are 'crazy' people in Los Angeles as there are in Belgium. But the 'normal' man or woman I feel is very conservative."

The couple have had an entertaining time in Boston. They enjoy going out to restaurants (seafood, steak and Italian), films (recently, "Rain Man" and "Tequila Sunrise") and they go to the Museum of Science frequently. "There isn't that much time, of course," she said. "What we do is go out when we have people visiting us. We love the Museum and we take visitors with us there but it's never repetitive be-

Naturally an accurate barometer to the emotions of the season is dependent on how well the player is performing. He has played much better this season, benefiting from the year's experience and also from the Celtics' commitment to the young players on the team.

"It's going good," commented Mark about the year. "You always want to play a lot of minutes but in my spot, behind Robert Parish, there isn't always going to be a lot of time. But there are more opportunities to play this season, especially with Larry's injury. Jimmy is trying a lot of different

Utah, Los Angeles and New York.

Mark's younger brother, a Californian, was even more excited about the snow. He was out during the December snowstorm, playing and throwing snowballs. They celebrated the holidays together (In Belgium the festivities for the youngsters comes on December 6th and practical gifts are exchanged on Christmas.). They celebrated a happy stop for Mark Acres' basketball journey overlooking the harbor during the festive white snowfall, with the people celebrating, enjoying winter's delights.

Back to Step in March?

Larry's Return is on Track

The return of Larry Bird, Celtics superstar, may come as near as March 1 according to a statement by Dr. Arnold Scheller in Boston January 5th.

"He's progressing very well to this point," commented Dr. Scheller. "What we'd like to do is get him on a walking program and then examine the effect of the walking on his feet."

Bird's casts were placed on both feet after his November 20 surgery, a procedure performed to remove painful bone spurs which were affecting both Achilles tendons. The encasements were removed January 5th.

"If he responds well," Scheller continued, and when he can mobilize, we'd move him up to a light jogging, then running, then playing.

"I'd say March 1 is a conservative estimate. It could be sooner, it could also be later. It just depends on how much he can do."

"I admit I had some serious reservations about everything," Bird stated. "But the best word I can say is that the pain is pretty much gone. It's a tremendous relief."

Bird has begun shooting at practice in addition to his considerable lengthy workouts on the weights for his upper body conditioning. He then rides the stationary bike and after this, he is in the whirlpool for further therapy.

Celtics Coach Jimmy Rodgers com-

mented, "The best thing I can say is that everything appears positive. We really can't make any definite plans (about a definite date of return). But we can go by what the doctor says. Recently he told me seven weeks and that would have him back at a good time for us. Of course when you're talking about Larry, any time he gets back will be a good time for our team."

Friend Glenn Ordway, broadcaster of Celtics' games alongside Johnny Most, felt that Bird's attitude throughout the whole ordeal has been surprisingly tolerant. "People thought he'd be going crazy — having to sit out for such a long period

of time. But he's fine and he's in an excellent frame of mind. I spoke with Dinah (Mattingly, Bird's fiancée) and she told me she expected Larry to be going crazy with the inactivity but he's been fine."

Joe Qatato, an assistant to Equipment Manager Wayne Lebeaux and one of Bird's best friends, stated that Bird's attitude was "optimistic."

"But Larry's an optimistic person," pointed out Qatato. "He was optimistic even when he was going through all of that misery (i.e., the pain before the surgery)."

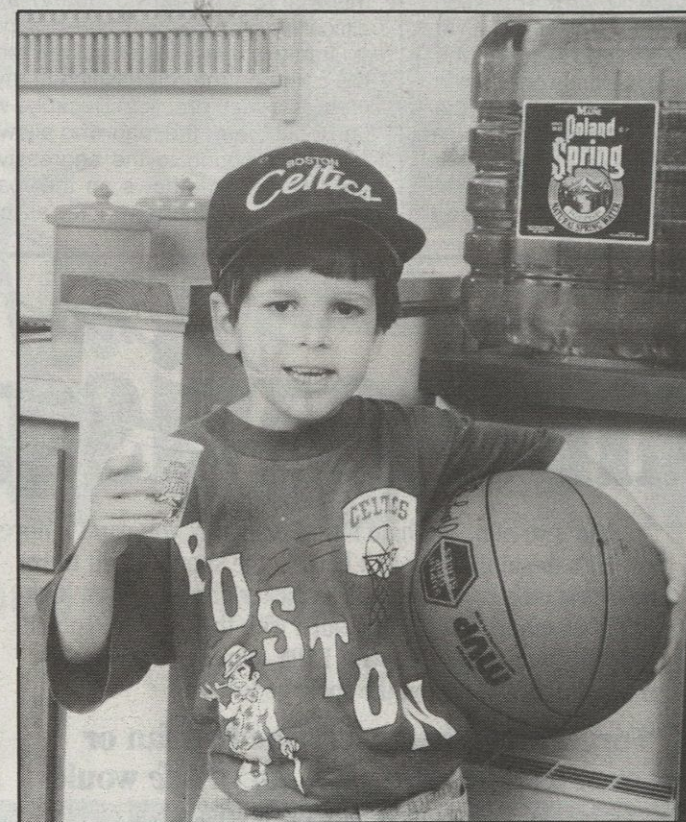
Jeff Twiss, the Celtics Public Relations Director, stated that if everything contin-

ued to progress as well as it has, that the March 1 return date "made sense."

"I think the team doesn't want Larry to have to worry about all of the traveling that's involved because we're in a long West Coast swing in February. Then the team comes back for a Hartford game (February 24th vs. Milwaukee) and then we're back out on the road again: to New York and Charlotte. Beginning March 1st, we're home for five of the next six games." Twiss pointed out that he hasn't been told by either Dr. Scheller or Executive Vice President-General Manager Jan Volk to make an official statement concerning Bird's return.

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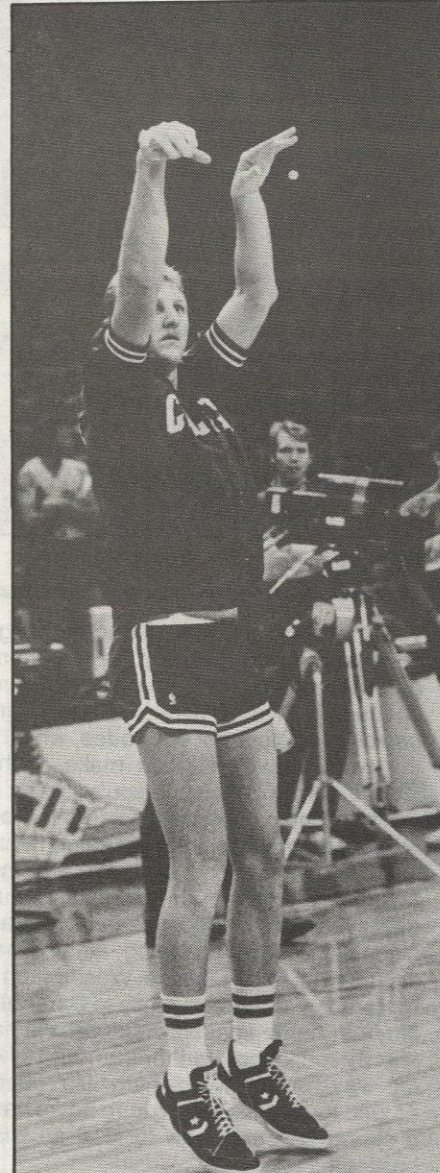


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Larry Bird: Back Soon?



By Bob Cousy

Nearing Midyear

Despite the Celtics' recent period of difficulties in which they lost five of six games (including defeats at home to title contenders Cleveland and Phoenix), I think it is premature to throw in the towel on this season. I wouldn't characterize this as a "rebuilding" year and eliminate the chances this team has this season. I say this principally because of the great potential shown in the first round draft choices of the last two (1987 & 1988) years, Reggie Lewis and Brian Shaw. In my view, the strides made recently by Brad Lohaus and Mark Acres lead me to believe that the Celtics may be developing the type of strong young bench they were hoping for when the year began. As I've remarked in this space previously, the possible problematic area that we do have is the productivity of the veterans, other than Robert Parish.

The challenge is to have that good young bench come in and give the veterans quality rest time while at the same time motivating the vet to play at an even higher level (because the veteran feels some competition coming from a younger guy).

FASTBREAKS

When veterans reach a certain point in their career, human nature takes over. There's just an instinctual tendency (seemingly) to pace yourself during the regular season as they go through the aging process. The challenge for Jimmy Rodgers in this team sport is to be able to develop the type of substitution rotation that will enable the team to play at its maximum efficiency for forty-eight minutes. In this instance, when we're talking about motivating the veteran player, it's by utilizing two tools: One, how to best rotate the younger players off the bench, and Two, by the proper combination of coddling the guys and/or cracking the whip, he is finally able to motivate the experienced talent effectively.

Is the talent level of the veterans decreasing? In my view, I think the ability of the veteran nucleus (which was called the best starting unit in the league at the beginning of the season) remains at a very high level. Age certainly isn't a factor when talking about Danny Ainge or Kevin McHale. Parish has had an outstanding year and Bird of course has been injured. The possible problem area might have been Dennis Johnson; he has had a nagging Achilles tendon problem all year and that has apparently hampered his play. Yet, if that weren't as bad as it had been earlier, (in a recent interview I did with him in New York he claimed that he was feeling considerably better.) then the question might have centered around his age. At age 35, has Dennis declined some? I tend to think the injury has been the problem in Dennis's instance. For the first time, he admitted to the extent it had been bothering him when we did the interview in New York. He has never been a malingeringer. In fact, since he's been in Boston, he's been

just the opposite, as he's played with injuries ranging from a fractured hand to a separated shoulder. I definitely would give Dennis Johnson the benefit of any doubt. If he isn't taking the ball to the basket as strongly as he once did, then the injury had to have been affecting his movement in the majority of cases. I recall that Larry Bird made the comment last season that he knew Dennis was ready to play when he (Larry) would see DJ taking the ball inside. We haven't been seeing it as much from Dennis this year and when he has gone in, it hasn't been as strong.

Veterans' diminished capabilities are a subtle matter. Because most times, the experienced ballplayer won't admit to himself that he might be "losing it". The most recent example is Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, who it appears to me, probably should have retired before the beginning of last season. I believe Kareem really struggled during the playoffs last year.

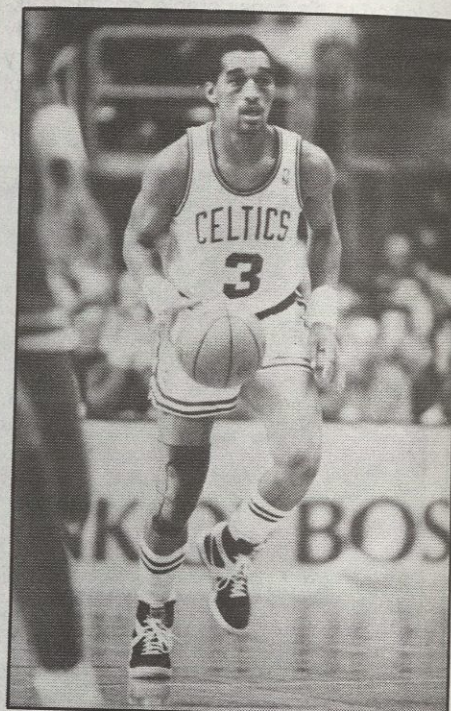
DJ's problems—for whatever reason—have influenced the direction of the team as a whole. The uptempo game is something Brian Shaw needs to play effectively and if the halfcourt is Dennis's best context, then the problem for the team is what DJ is not doing (i.e., settling more often for the outside shot than he might have in years past and not being as effective taking the ball down low). When we look at the difficulties the team has had on the road this year (3-10 in early January), then the difficulties become even more pronounced.

Jimmy is trying to control the tempo of the game on the road, which in my judgment is a wise practice. Because without Larry out there, the man who allows your team to respond to the aggressiveness the home team shows on the road, the Celtics need to shorten games as much as

possible as the visitor. (Even with Bird, the team has had to fight an uphill war on the road during the past two seasons). This is where the team needs DJ to be playing at his best and if he's struggling, the team's performance wavers with him.

The outlook of this season obviously depends on Dennis' increased output but it also will be related to how a number of open-ended questions (at this time) are answered. As we've alluded to: The continued development of the kids. And how well Larry plays when he comes back. Hopefully, he'll be the Bird of old, feeling relieved from the pain and refreshed and ready to play after being able to rest during the three months of the season where games are often more difficult to rise up for. Bird's injury as well leads to the subject of health for the rest of the players. Obviously, in order for the team to compete at its best, the whole team should ideally be injury-free. In fact, there had been some talk that the team might consider sitting DJ down to allow the Achilles to heal with a six week rest. If the team is healthy and the youngsters continue to develop in a positive fashion, then Bird's return might be the stimulus the team needs to make this a quality season.

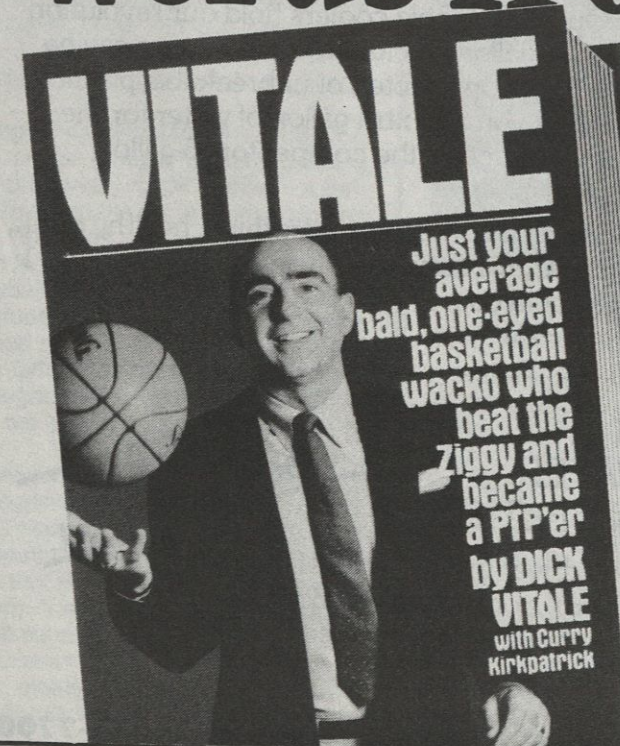
Jimmy Rodgers' job has not been the most enviable of situations this season. But I think he has a very good feel for the team and I think he's doing as well as he can, eliciting the maximum effort from the



Dennis Johnson: Injuries Healing

young players and having good strategic command. I was asked if he was hampered by being a first-year coach. In response, I have to think not. He hasn't panicked and sought out trades, which is the worst move you can make in this league, particularly when you're losing (If you're winning, then trades seem to work out very favorably). Jimmy certainly hasn't coached by rote and has shown a willingness to experiment. For example, he has displayed great confidence in Ron Grandison, who wasn't playing at all when Jimmy went to him against Washington in November, or more recently in San Antonio or at home against Charlotte. He has shown confidence in the team and I like the way he's handled them. He's been around the league for too long not to have a strong sense of how to lead an NBA basketball team.

Words from the ^{wacko} wise.



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Celtics to Surprise when Bird Returns

A Sleeping Giant

Following a loss to the Phoenix Suns recently at the Garden, a disheartened Kevin McHale said the Celtics are not where they'd like to be at this juncture in the season. Looking at the Celtics' 13-16 record, it was hard not to agree.

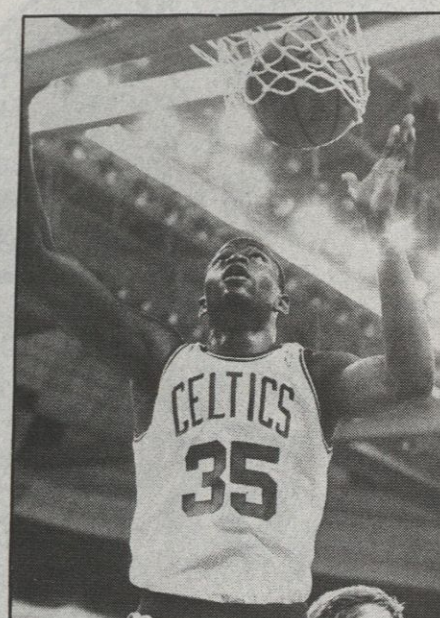
Nobody said life without Larry Bird was going to be easy, but the hardest part is accepting the Celtics, who still boast four all-stars, could be just an average team without him.

Perhaps Charlotte forward Kurt Rambis hit the nail on the head when he said the Celtics are struggling because everybody is trying to pick up Bird's slack and their own games are suffering as a result.

But Suns coach Cotton Fitzsimmons offered the best advice when he said, "I hope you guys (Boston media) are generous with the Celtics now because things sure are going to be different when Larry Bird returns."

In so many ways Fitzsimmons assessment of the Celtics as a sleeping giant probably comes closest to the truth. It's odd that none of the teams which have won at the Garden this season leave there gloating. Rather, each team attributes Boston's shortcomings to Bird's absence, always noting that he'll be back in time for the playoffs.

Taking a look at this year's record and comparing it to last season's bears out the theory that Boston is indeed a sleeping giant. Parish is enjoying his best year ever, McHale is fully recovered from foot



Reggie Lewis: Can Turn a Game Around

injury, and Dennis Johnson and Danny Ainge are receiving great support from Brian Shaw and Jim Paxson in the backcourt.

That leaves Brad Lohaus and Reggie Lewis as the wildcards once Bird returns, in much the same roles that Dennis Rodman and John Salley play for the Pistons. Like the Pistons bench, any of these four players coming off the Celtics pine has the ability to turn a game around.

That still leaves unanswered the ques-

tion of why the Celtics are playing .500 ball as the season approaches its midpoint. Last season after 31 games, despite injuries to both McHale and Bird, the Celtics were 21-10. The only salient answer is the Bird factor.

With Bird on the bench, the Celtics have yet to develop a go-to guy to take charge of scoring in the fourth quarter. Dennis Johnson is still quarterbacking the Celtics down the stretch, but now there is no one there hollering for the ball.

This season, ten of the Celtics first 16 losses have been by 10 points or less. These are games the Celtics feasted on last year. This year the Celtics mark stands at 6-10 in games decided by 10 points or less; last season they were 12-5.

That six game difference between this year and last represents the difference in the Celtics 15-16 record this season and their 21-10 mark last year.

Last season the Celtics were able to put together several mini-streaks that resulted in a 57-25 final record. This season they haven't won more than three games in a row.

The ups and downs the Celtics are experiencing this year are traits of a young team learning a new system, certainly not a reflection of a bad team. When the Celtics are on this year, they have an explosive quality they've lacked since Bill Walton came off the bench.

Coach Jimmy Rodgers has implemented a trapping halfcourt defense that utilizes the immense athletic talents of

Lewis and Shaw. When the trap works the Celtics look insurmountable as a team; when it's not working, the Celtics seem to be five players who've never been on the same court together.

At the beginning of the season, Jimmy Rodgers said there were going to be some rough times ahead. Learning comes at a price and the Celtics are paying now and hoping to collect in the spring.

Another aspect of this year's team that's rarely noted is the pride Rodgers has instilled in the second unit. In past years, a great delineation was made between the first team and the bench. This, to a degree, has changed under Rodgers.

Varying his substitution patterns Rodgers has been able to use his bench to fill specific roles on the court, but he's also established a second five who can come off the bench and give teams a run for their money by trapping on defense and pushing the ball quickly up the court on offense.

In the past few years the reserve players wouldn't see action until the starters had built up a lead. Then they remained in the game until the opposition whittled the lead away and the starters would be reinserted before the game got out of hand.

This year the bench is being used as a weapon, often coming into an even ball game and driving up the score before the first unit is brought back to maintain the lead established by the reserves.

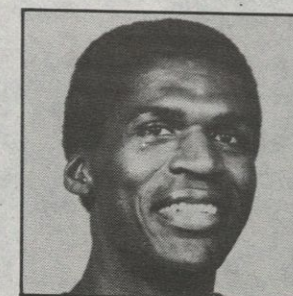
As Cotton Fitzsimmons says, wait until Larry Bird gets back.

CELTICS PERSPECTIVE

What are Your Super Bowl Picks?

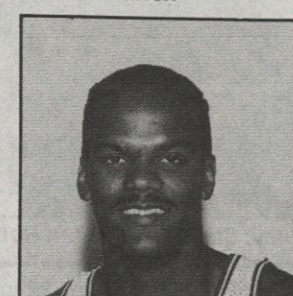
As many Americans now know, the festivities of Super Bowl Sunday have spread throughout the land, enlarging the scope of a championship football game into something resembling a national holiday. Parties on that day abound, conversation and interest peaks until the event is played out and the symbolic drama is played out. After an accompanying sports tradition, the CBS broadcast of a Celtic/Piston game that Super Bowl Sunday, most of the Celtics will be watching the game. As of January 8, before the Conference championships, here's who the Celtics chose to win it all.

Robert Parish. The 49ers will take it. Coaching, a strong rushing attack, paced by Roger Craig, and momentum. They have all the tools to go the distance.



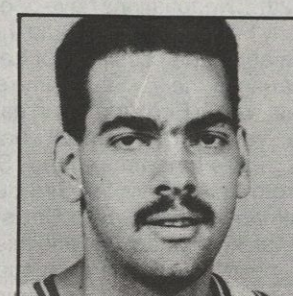
Robert Parish

Ron Grandison. My California team, the 49ers, will be there. The main reason I think they'll win is that they've been there (in the Super Bowl) before. In the NFC championship, I think they'll handle the Bears' quarterback and in the Super Bowl, they've shown they can defeat an AFC opponent. They beat the Bengals in the 1982 game. And the Bills have never been to the championship, so I think that will work against them.



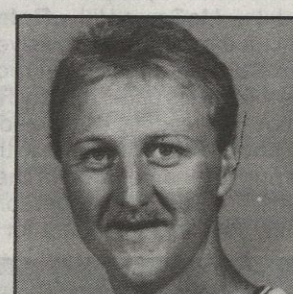
Ron Grandison

Ramon Rivas. I haven't a rooting interest in the game. In truth, I haven't been watching much football during the past month. My playoff interests ended when the Eagles were knocked out by the Chicago Bears. I am a great fan of the Eagles' Quarterback, Randall Cunningham. He has superb ability, able to both pass and run effectively. A very exciting player.



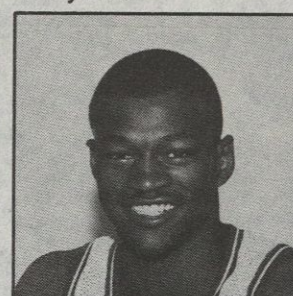
Ramon Rivas

Larry Bird. I don't have a pick. Both conferences have good teams in the finals, and it just depends who plays the best when the pressure's on. I think the team that plays the best fundamental ball — and is willing to take the innovative chance when the opportunity presents itself — will win the game.



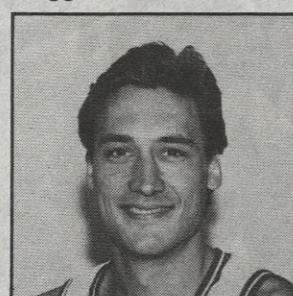
Larry Bird

Reggie Lewis. I won't be watching. When there's a football game on, I just switch the channel on the television set. The programs I like are movies — all kinds. I liked Scarface recently, for example. I also like Miami Vice, but I don't really get a chance to watch it now since most of our games are on Friday nights.

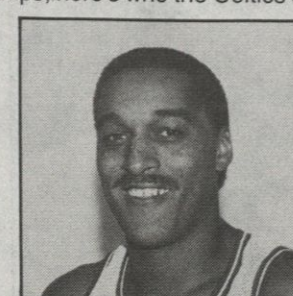


Reggie Lewis

Jim Paxson. My pick is easy. Cincinnati. I grew up in Kettering, Ohio and went on to college in Dayton and my interests have never really wavered from teams that have played in Ohio. The Bengals have a tremendous running attack and a winning tradition that goes back to Paul Brown's success with the Browns. It's a Bengal year, a Super Bowl win over the 49ers.

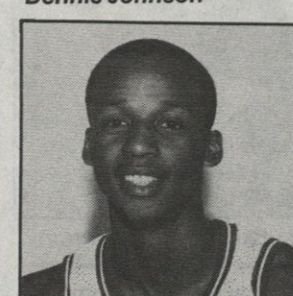


Jim Paxson



Dennis Johnson

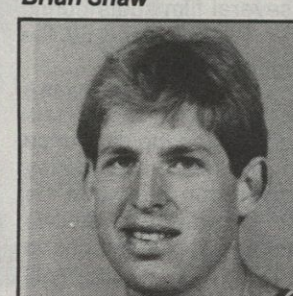
Dennis Johnson. I think the 49ers will take it because of two major factors: balance and experience. They have been playing well on both offense and defense; offensively, the mix the pass and the run well, and defensively, they've made all the big plays.



Brian Shaw

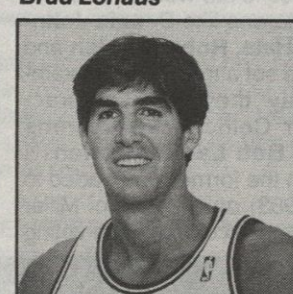
Brian Shaw. I'm from the Bay Area, so naturally the 49ers. I think at this late stage of the season, the 49ers really came together under their coach, Bill Walsh. He's a mastermind, and the team seems to be an extension of him on the floor. Like him, they are intelligent and also like him, they play no-nonsense football when the playoffs reach the second and third stage.

This season's team has a great defense and three superior offensive weapons: Joe Montana (QB), Roger Craig (RB) and Jerry Rice (WR).



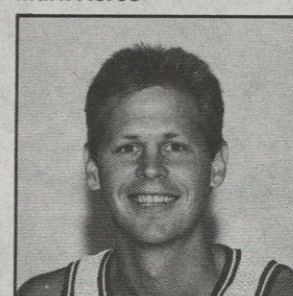
Brad Lohaus

Brad Lohaus. After having gone through college in Iowa, I began to like the Bears. They have a great spirit and I really think their competitiveness is something special. I think they have the best team right now. Their dedication and determination have taken them this far — I read somewhere that after a long practice before the NFC championship, twenty-five or thirty guys were up in the weight room, still working out. That's what I meant when I said "determination." They seem to be a team on a mission.



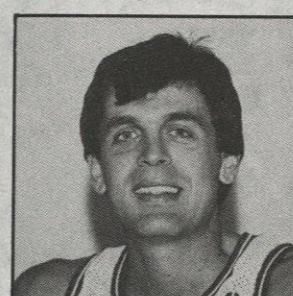
Mark Acres

Mark Acres. The 49ers. I think they have a great quarterback in Joe Montana and they have two fantastic offensive players in Roger Craig and Jerry Rice. Their defense has been coming through so I look for the Niners to go all the way.



Danny Ainge

Danny Ainge. The 49ers will take it because of their passing game and their effective running game, paced by Roger Craig. I believe in a game like that, the team needs a game-breaker to win it and I think the 49ers have that kind of player in Jerry Rice, their wide receiver. He reminds me of myself, when I was playing end as a high school player in Eugene, Oregon!



Kevin McHale

Kevin McHale. I thought that when the season was entering December the Vikings were the best team. I still think they are. I couldn't believe the way they played against the 49ers. For some reason, they didn't have it when the game was played in San Francisco. But I haven't conceded anything, even now.

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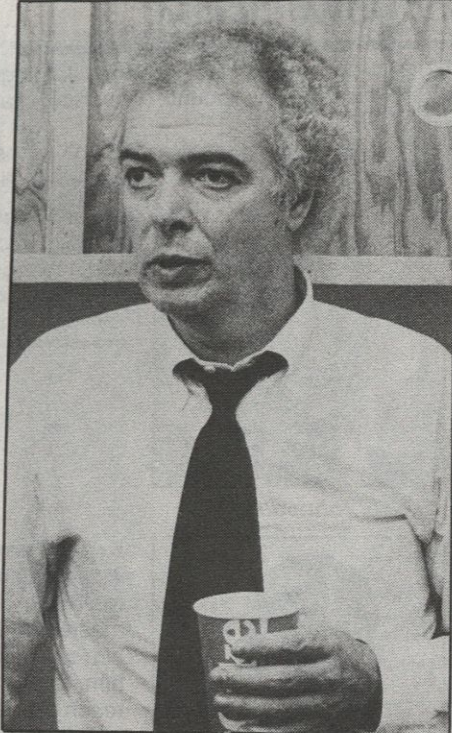
CELTICS CONFIDENTIAL

By Bob Schron

Cleveland's Year? Times have changed. Three years ago Lenny Wilkens, the Coach of the Cleveland Cavs, stood in the middle of the visiting locker room in Boston and patiently explained away a disappointing OT defeat to the Celtics. We're too young to even think about setting up for sophisticated plays," Wilkens said as he described a last-second killing transgression. "Boston is a great team. They know how to win games in the end."...Now, with the young nucleus having grown together, Cleveland might just possibly be the best team in the NBA. Brad Daugherty is "immense", Mark Price and Ron Harper are a young, talented and balanced guard combination and when John "Hot Rod" Williams and Larry Nance are in there together, Cleveland has the prototype model of an NBA 1980's champion on the floor. Big, fast, smart, and athletic. Cleveland's 115-114 win over the Celtics at the Garden was the Cavs' 1st win in the Garden since 1978, when Bill Fitch was the Cleveland coach and Walt Frazier still played...."We talked about the losing streak here for two years," reflected Wilkens afterward. "The kids are excited to win here, sure. But you have to remember, most of these kids didn't even give Boston or Cleveland a thought when all those games were being played in the early eighties."

Jimmy Rodgers was ejected from that Cleveland contest, his first ejection as Celtics' coach....Chris Ford took over and used the 1-3-1 trap to try and catch up late in the game...Defeat to the Cavs was the C's third straight loss to their Eastern Conference opponents.

Reggie Lewis has difficult time matching up with the aforementioned Williams-Nance frontcourt...K.C. Jones, and his wife, Ellen, were vacationing in Hawaii for the holidays as Jones scouted the Aloha Tournament...When the Celtics visited Denver for their first post-Christmas game, Brad Lohaus had a reunion with former high school coach (Greenway High in Phoenix) Pete Babcock...Babcock is now the president and General Manager of the Nuggets...The Boston Globe featured Larry Bird as one of "The Ten Who Made Headlines" in 1988...Bob Ryan, who is off of the Celtics beat for the Globe because of his collaboration with Bird on the latter's autobiography, nevertheless still writes a notes column about the NBA for the paper...In a thumbnail sketch ranking the teams throughout the NBA, Ryan rated Boston sixteenth...Maybe it matters, maybe not, but Charles Oakley of the Knicks thought New York was "too relaxed" when they visited the Boston Garden and absorbed a 117-104 defeat. "We came in here without intensity. We got into our hotel late (the day of the game) and didn't approach it right. Brian Shaw and Reggie Lewis really make a difference. They really pick them up."...M.L. Carr was a visitor at practice one day after Christmas, scrimmaging with Lewis, Shaw and Ron Grandison...Visiting Magic Johnson in Lakers' locker room after the Celtics knocked off the defending champions, 110-95, was none other than Larry Joe Bird...The two have become good friends over the past three years after



Jimmy Rodgers: Earned First Ejection

several seasons of intense competition...Jimmy Rodgers promoted Honda Automobile in several film spots during Celtic telecasts on WLVI-Channel 56, the team's flagship station in Boston...

Assistant coach Lann Van Eman was a recent guest on WFAN's sports talk show...Asked to describe the difference between the college game he recently emerged from at Oregon State and the NBA, Van Eman replied. "There are two in a college game you might see one to ten great plays. In the NBA, each play is arguably subject for a highlight film. The second difference is the work ethic of the NBA player. Veterans like Dennis Johnson, Kevin McHale, Robert Parish and Larry Bird have set a tremendous example by the way they work at practice."...Former Celtic Dave Cowens appeared with Bob Lanier (Cowens's teammate when the former was traded to the Bucks in 1983) on a series of Miller Lite advertisements promoting fan voting



Brad Lohaus: Reunion with High School Coach



Pat Riley: Sticking to 8 Man Rotation

for the NBA All-Star Game which will be played in Houston this season on February 12th...Negotiations have begun albeit gingerly between the NBA and the Celtics to see about the possibility of Larry Bird appearing in the All-Star Game's 3-Point contest, which Bird has won in each of the three years the contest has been held...Bird's long-time friend, Sgt. Tom Hill from Indiana, visited Bird during the Christmas holidays...Bob Cousy, WLVI-Channel 56 color analyst and this season a columnist for Celtics Pride, appeared in Nashua last week to sign copies of his book *The Celtic Mystique* which was published by McGraw-Hill...Roland Lazenby, author of the impressive *Celtics Green Book* was in Boston recently to profile the Celtics under Jimmy Rodgers. Lazenby had recently completed another story about Adrian Dantley, the overpowering offensive force of the Detroit Pistons. "Ad is a fine person," said Lazenby. "He frightens off a lot of press

because of his scowl but he's very cooperative. He's a shrewd investor of his money and on the floor, he's an excellent teammate. He freely acknowledges that (the Pistons) are Isiah Thomas's team."...Donna Johnson Wife of Dennis Johnson, will have her first public art display when she, as a member of the Black Student Exhibit of the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, celebrates Black History Month (in February). The exhibit will be featured in the MFA in Boston from February 15-March 3... Johnson's work was featured in the May 1st, 1987 edition of *Celtics Pride*...

Notes. Former Celtics' Head Scout Ed Badger was in Boston with his new team, the Charlotte Hornets, where he is an assistant coach. Badger, rumored to be in the running for the coaching position as head of the Indiana Pacers, never actively sought out the job. "It was tough because that team needs a lot of work. I'm very happy with the Hornets. The situation is ideal: Bench coaching again and a reduced scouting load."...Badger thought the Celtics would eventually be on the right course. "They have to hang in there," he commented. "If they get Larry (Bird) back they can still win ten in a row and catch everybody. A realistic goal is winning the second seed in the East. Then they'd have the homecourt advantage for every series but the last one in the conference"....Butch Beard, the Nets' Assistant Coach was scouting the Celtics for the teams' upcoming clash in the Meadowlands in mid-January... "Boston is a team that's undergoing a lot of change, but I think Jimmy Rodgers is doing a very good job," said Beard. "What he's doing is trying to develop a ten-man rotation and that's a very hard thing to do. Pat Riley for example plays eight guys with the Lakers so the substitution rotation is much more predicatable. He has to rotate three guards, three forwards and two centers. It's predictable, it's easier to plan. But Jimmy's trying to develop and win. It's a very difficult thing to do."...The Nets try to stay in the race with the Celtics with more uncertainties then either Beard or Willis Reed, the Coach, would like... "The problem is inconsistency. We have talent, but we can't win at home, and I don't know why. Much of the loyalty in basketball in the New York area goes to the Knicks. They beat us by scoring 20 straight points when we were ahead, 87-70, and the place was cheering wildly for them. Trouble was, we were playing in the Meadowlands."...Keith Lee, once a highly prized young player (including kudos from Red Auerbach), now appears to be reaching a premature (age 26) end to his career...Physically, he doesn't seem to be able to handle the stressful world of the NBA...One assistant coach in the Garden recently frowned when asked about the Celtics' playoff chances. "Not this year," he intoned...Charlotte Hornets' Director of Player Personnel Gene Littles formerly worked as an Assistant Coach with the Chicago Bulls had this to say about the trade of Charles Oakley to Boston's rival, the Knicks. "There was a personality problem there, and I don't think that it was a good deal for the Bulls. Sometimes you have to get along with a guy who's giving you short-term problems. In the long range time frame, moving the player causes you even more problems than you'd have if you decided to keep him."

INNERVIEW

Dennis Johnson's Enduring Success with the Celtics

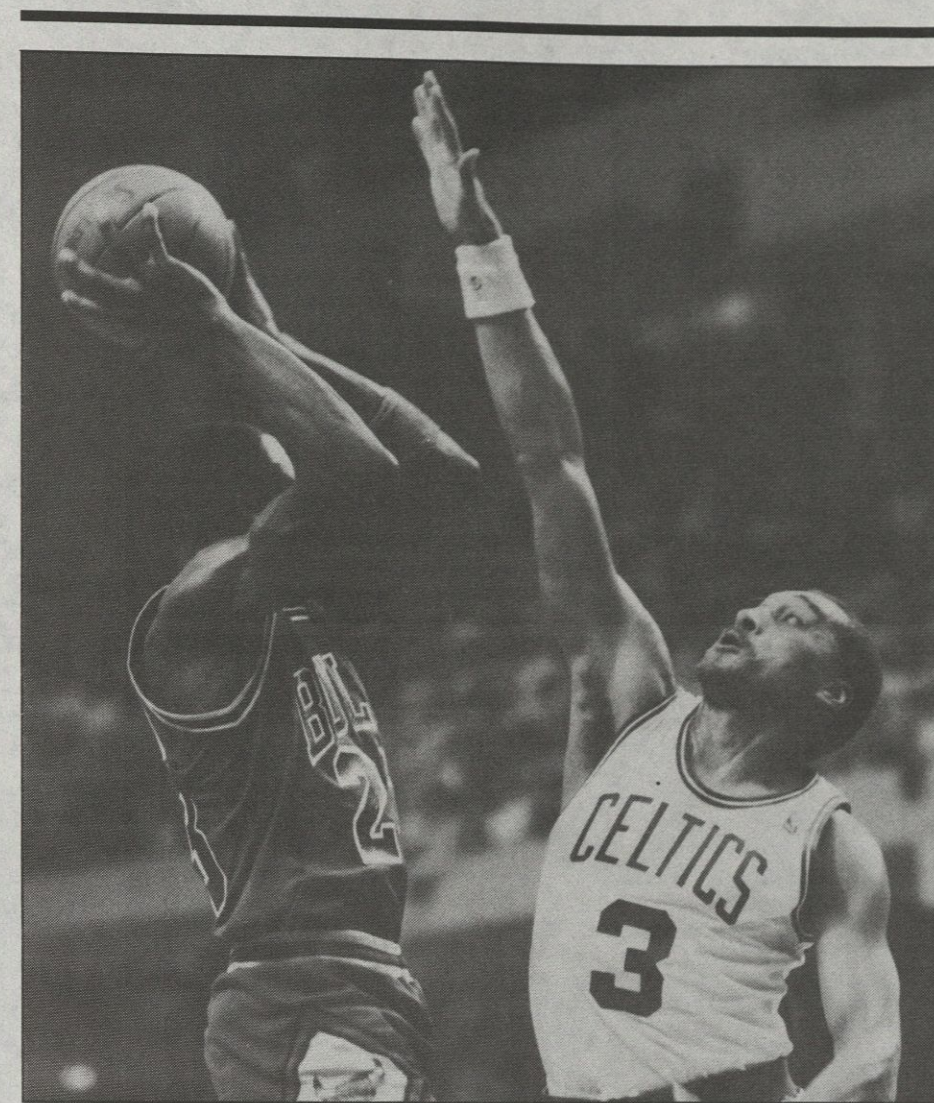
When Dennis Johnson agreed to terms with the Celtics through the end of next season, the team was assured the services still of one of the finest guards in the history of the game. Johnson has won the Playoff Most Valuable Player, First Team All-Pro and has been a key figure on three National Basketball Association championships. At the conclusion of next year he will have played fourteen seasons, the most of any player at his position, surpassing Hal Greer of the Syracuse Nats and Philadelphia 76ers. Johnson has been injury-plagued this season; bothered from the start of the Pre-Season with an Achilles tendon injury, his minutes played per contest have decreased from 34.6 last season to slightly under 31 this year. (he played in 374 mpp in 1984-85). However, Johnson reported that his injured legs have improved and hoped that he would be playing at full strength once again with the All-Star break a month away. Celtics Pride interviewed Johnson recently.

CELTICS PRIDE: With the team at around .500 at the turn of the New Year, it seems as if it's a rebuilding season. At this stage of your career, could you have seen yourself as part of something like a restructuring program?

JOHNSON: I don't know if we're in a rebuilding phase. I don't know if that's what it is with our team. When Jimmy took the job, he said he'd play a lot more people. I think he's sticking to that program. We're at about .500 now; but there's more than two-thirds of the regular season left. Maybe people around the league or the fans and media aren't giving us much of a chance. But the people whose opinion I really care about are the Celtic players and coaches. We haven't given up on this season.

CELTICS PRIDE: Your injuries have limited your effectiveness and playing time this season. How have they progressed?

JOHNSON: I think I'm finally getting back to the point where I can begin to play all-out for the entire time I'm out there. I think I'm at the eighty-five to ninety percent level. I had been having a lot of problems earlier in the year.



Dennis Johnson: 14 Seasons of Excellent Basketball

CELTICS PRIDE: Larry Bird's absence obviously has hurt the effectiveness of the team. But your ability to play with him has been well-documented (the near-perfect meshing of complementary abilities and approach). What has the loss of Larry meant to your game?

JOHNSON: Well, I think by now I've developed an almost standard answer. First of all, the team lost Larry. It wasn't only me. Personally I lost five to six assists a game because Larry is such a great shooter and scorer. But as I say, the team misses

Larry—he's one of the best players (if not the best) to ever play the game. Larry made our team levels and levels better. I just don't miss Larry. As part of the team, we all miss Larry.

CELTICS PRIDE: You had a particularly strong relationship with (former Celtic Coach) K.C. Jones. How are you getting along with Jimmy Rodgers?

JOHNSON: We're doing fine. I just find it ironic sometimes about how everything is perceived. At the beginning of the season, Jimmy made it clear that he wanted to play more guys and cut down some of the minutes of the veterans. I immediately came out publicly and supported the decision. I still do. But if my minutes are less (partly because of my injured Achilles tendon) and my input and statistics are down, then talk immediately starts that I'm a less effective player, I don't happen to subscribe to that thinking.

CELTICS PRIDE: How do you approach the game in this type of environment, after you were appreciated so thoroughly before?

JOHNSON: Well, as I said, the only people I have to have support from are the players and coaches. I follow them and they follow me (since I am the point guard), but more than that, I don't let my guard down for one moment because of gossip from whatever

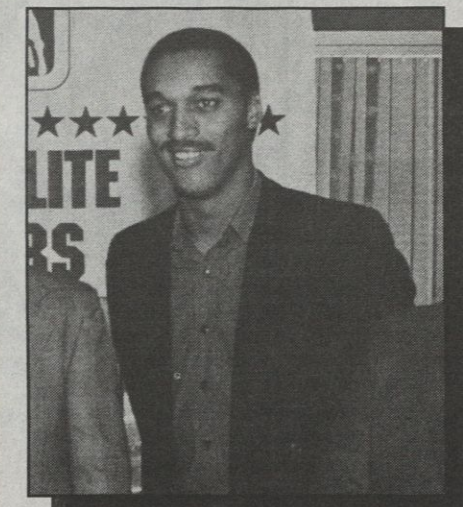
source. I believe criticism would affect me more if the people who made comments knew what it was like to play with two swollen Achilles tendons. Or a broken wrist. Or a separated shoulder...

Don't misunderstand. I recognize that this is part of my job and I am compensated for placing myself out there when I'm hurt. I accept that responsibility. But I do think it's necessary to state that my bones are made of human stuff and that under sever impact, they'll become fragile and may break.

CELTICS PRIDE: Before the season started, you signed a one-year contract extension that will take you through the end of next season. Will you continue in basketball?

JOHNSON: I think that the contract may signal the end of playing basketball on the court but there are several other areas of the game that I'd consider participating in. There's basketball on the court and there's basketball in the front office or coaching. Just because I might be through as a player doesn't necessarily mean I'd be through with the game. And I haven't definitely decided that I would want to stop playing in two seasons.

CELTICS PRIDE: At this stage of your career, do you look back at yourself as a player and if so, how do you perceive yourself?



Dennis Johnson: Earners Much Respect from the League

JOHNSON: I do look back some. I think I am a player who played at his best in three years of high school, then in college and then after next season fourteen in the NBA. That I played and I never let down and so I never let the team I was playing for down. On any of three professional teams I played with.

I play as hard as I can and that's all I can ask of myself. I think I gained a great measure of respect in the league and I know that I helped every team I played with to win.

I don't think everybody throughout the league liked me. But I sincerely believe they respected me. In my view the three important achievements were maintaining good health and conditioning, gaining respect in the league and being part of three championship teams.

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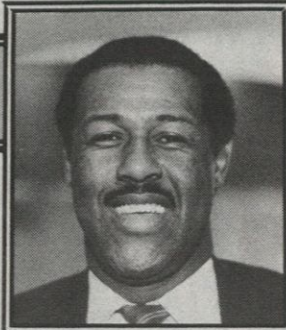
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Mark Ford





AS I SEE IT

By M.L. Carr

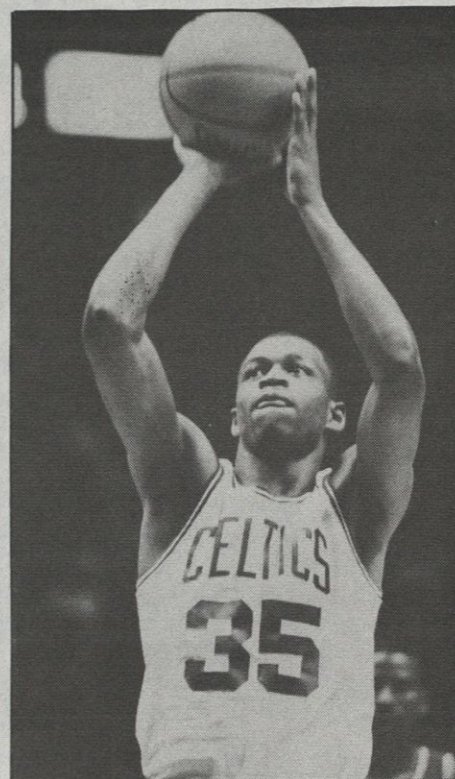
Shaw and Lewis

I have been impressed with the work that the youngsters on the Celtics have done. I watched with great interest last week when the Celtics' pressing team—including Mark Acres-Jim Paxson-Robert Parish-Reggie Lewis and Brian Shaw—harassed some quality teams into several mistakes. This unit forced the Lakers, Knicks and Cavs into several turnovers during crucial spots of those games; this team demonstrated speed, quickness, aggressiveness and coherence, qualities that obviously create a winner. I thought it was particularly interesting to watch this team (highlighted by youth) go up against the Cavs.

Three years ago the Cavs were a group of young players with talent who were learning how to play in the pros. Guys like Brad Daugherty, Ron Harper, John Williams and Mark Price paid some early dues coming up; but now, they are a legitimate contender for the championship. They are a group who not only have increased experience on an individual level. They have come up through the ranks together.

This is what the Celtics are trying to implement right now. A program that will bear fruit in the next two seasons. I'm impressed with the moves of Acres and the willingness and aggressiveness of Lohaus. But I think the real potential stars of the present youth movement are Reggie Lewis and Brian Shaw.

There has been considerable criticism about this year's team being unable to develop a "go-to" player; that is, they seem to be lacking a player (in the absence of Larry Bird) who they can go to in the final minutes of a game. I believe the coaching staff under Jimmy Rodgers really sees this and they are developing this quality in both of the young players I've noted.



Reggie Lewis: Displaying Great Talent

For two reasons. Reggie appears to have the scoring ability and intense willingness to shoot under pressure. He has absolute confidence in his shot—it is just this attribute which is needed in crucial game situations.

Brian on the other hand doesn't appear to have great shooting skill. However, he is definitely a take-charge type of ball-player from what I've seen of him. He's played exceptionally well! Already he's a shooter with the type of ability to capitalize when a defense sags way back and dares him to shoot. This is just how Don Chaney would burn teams when Duck played for us in the early seventies (and later when I played with him in St. Louis in the ABA and the Celtics in 1979). Don wasn't a great individual shooter of pure touch. But he could hit the shot out of a good team rhythm.

Dennis Johnson also is not a great shooter. But in the final three minutes or so of a game, Dennis rises above all the

others. You can see it in Dennis's eyes: Pure concentration, complete focus on the goal. When the game is on the line, Dennis wants it! Injuries have hurt DJ's game this season. But he's the ideal role model for Brian, whose game, in turn, is very reminiscent of Dennis's.

What's remaining to be done this year? There are a number of conditions that are affecting the development of these young players. I think that with any other team, the fact that the team they're on is struggling to stay above .500 might be a hindrance. That is, they might be tempted to accept mediocrity on the team performance level and be satisfied to let their respective games stagnate. But the Celtics never accept less than a total effort and even if they are struggling at the present time, the work ethic of the guys on the team remains strong. The effort is constant and the expectation of victory never wavers. Psychologically, there can't be a better atmosphere for a young player to develop in.

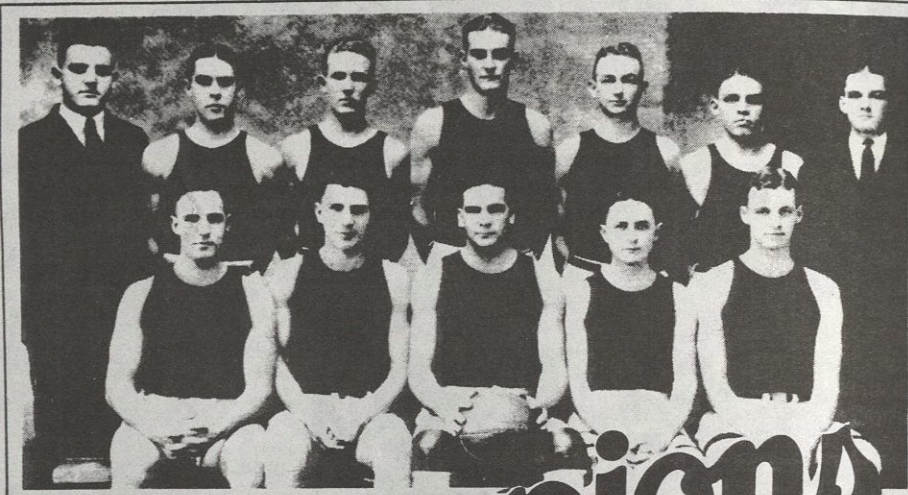
Every advance that the team makes in the absence of Larry has to help, too. The young players are assisting in building a strong team right now. They are percep-

tive enough I'm certain, that the talents of a Dennis, Danny Ainge, Robert Parish and Kevin McHale aren't diminishing. Every step forward right now not only means small victories for the present, it translates into a great team achievement later.

Finally, the fact that a Reggie Lewis has a Brian Shaw to work with every day, whether in practice or in games, is a tremendous boost. These fine individual talents can only improve exponentially when they are growing in tandem. Basketball is such a subtle game; as Reggie Lewis develops into a better and better scorer, he will only become that much better when he knows that Brian Shaw is out there, hungry for assists. And Shaw becomes that much more of a creative passer when he knows and understands the moves of a dynamic offensive force such as Lewis. With these young players as a foundation, the Celtics' remodeling program already is a success in its earliest phase.

And not least: The Celtic are proud of the fact that they build not only with players but with people. Shaw and Lewis are both good young men as well as good ballplayers.

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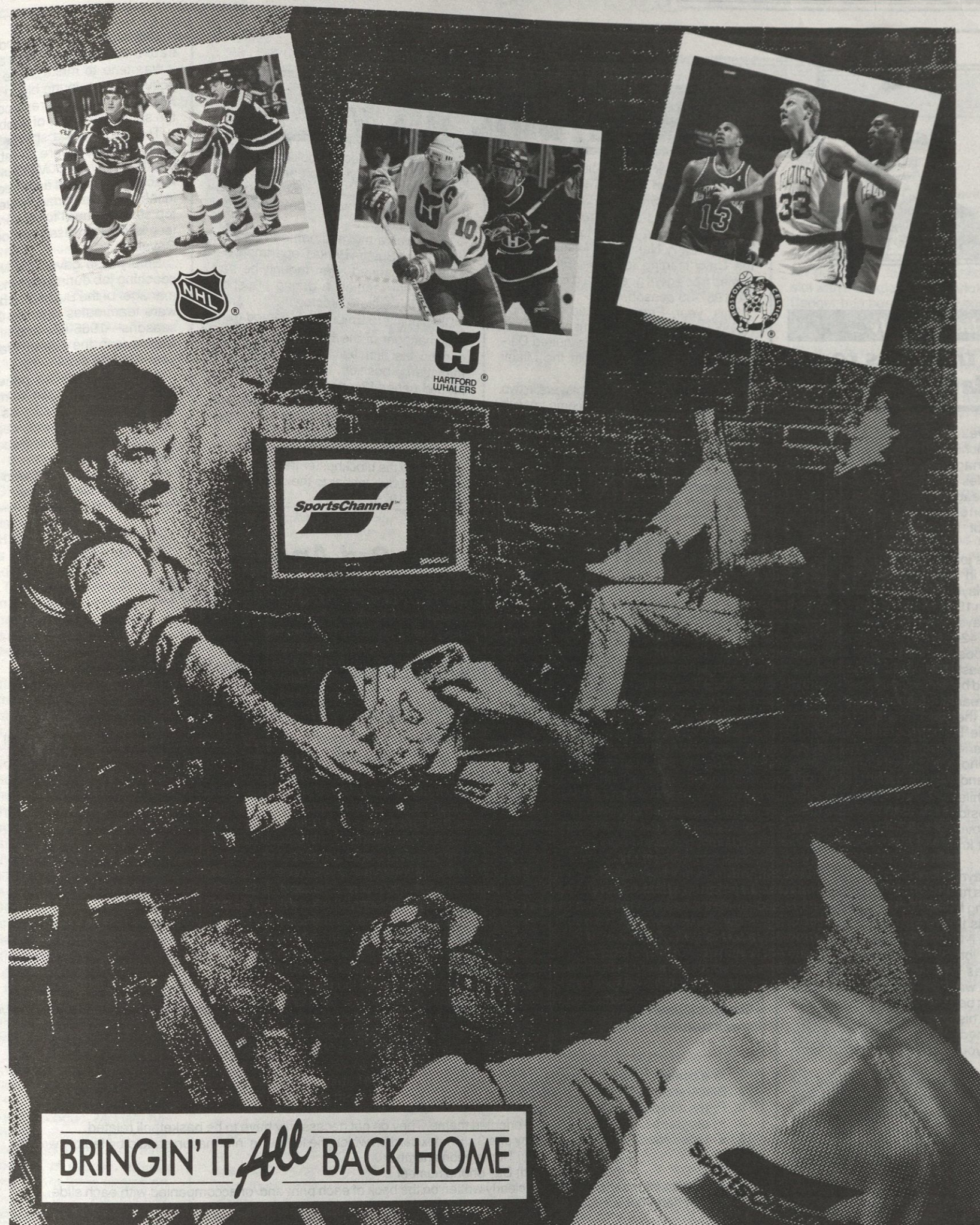
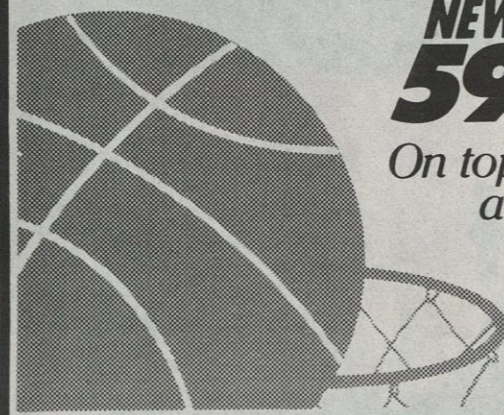
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Tue. 10	Oilers @ Kings (IIP)	11:30	Mon. 16	@ Toronto	7:30	Mon. 9	LA Clippers	7:30
Fri. 13	Islanders @ Devils	7:30	Wed. 18	@ Montreal	7:30	Wed. 11	Indiana	7:30
Sun. 15	Flames @ Sabres	7:00	Thur. 19	Montreal (TD)	11:00	Fri. 20	Philadelphia	7:30
Tue. 17	Penguins @ Islanders	8:00	Sat. 21	Los Angeles	7:30	Fri. 27	Sacramento	7:30
Sun. 22	Red Wings @ Capitals	7:30	Wed. 25	St. Louis	7:30	Sun. 29	Miami	3:30
Mon. 23	Flames @ Canadiens	7:30	Sat. 28	Quebec	7:30			
Sat. 28	Oilers @ Kings	10:30	Tue. 31	Buffalo	7:30			
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By Eddie Gillooly From the Cavs to the Haves

For years, the Cleveland Cavaliers franchise was in turmoil. The management made ridiculous trades and sold draft choices for cash. The league was so concerned with the operation of the franchise that it blocked a couple of trades the ownership attempted.

The Cavs joined the NBA as an expansion team in the 1970-71 season and made the playoffs for three straight years beginning in 1975-76. Then the bottom fell out. The Cavs last winning season until last year's 42-40 mark was in 1977-78 when they posted a 43-39 record.

After a disastrous 29-53 season in 1985-86, the Gund brothers, who purchased the Cavs five years ago, made the greatest decision in the franchise's history—they hired Wayne Embry as the team's vice-president/general manager.

Embry, who starred at Miami (of Ohio) University and was a six-time All-Star in the NBA while playing for the Cincinnati Royals, Boston Celtics and Milwaukee Bucks, is proving once again that he's one of the most knowledgeable managers in basketball.

"Wide Wayne" as he was known in his playing days has turned the dormant Cavs into a winning franchise and at this writing, his team has the best record in the NBA. And, he did it in just two seasons.

It took a lot of maneuvering. His first decision was to hire Lenny Wilkens as coach. This was a brilliant move because Wilkens has been a winner as a player and a coach in his many years in the NBA. Wilkens joined the Cavs with a reputation of building young teams into playoff contenders.

Next, Embry began cleaning house. Of the 15 players on the 1985-86 team, only forward Phil Hubbard remains on the current roster. This Cavs team is only 2 1/2 years old and it is keyed by two No. 1 draft choices in 1986—center Brad Daugherty and guard Ron Harper.

Embry traded Roy Hinson to Philadelphia for the right to draft first instead of third and named Daugherty as his choice. Three picks later, he selected Harper. In the second round he selected forward John Williams.

It's amazing what Embry and Wilkens have been able to accomplish in such a short time. Both are cinches to win the top awards as the Executive of the Year and Coach of the Year.

After securing Daugherty, Harper and Williams in the 1986 draft, they traded a second round pick to Dallas for the rights to negotiate with Mark Price, who was selected in the second round of that year's college draft by the Mavs.

COURTSIDE VIEW

Backup center Chris Dudley was a fourth round choice in 1987. The team's top choice was guard Kevin Johnson, who was traded in mid-season along with Mark West and Tyrone Corbin to the Phoenix Suns for Larry Nance and Mike Sanders, the Cavs starting forwards. Embry also signed free agent guard Craig Ehlo during the 1987-88 season.

This year Embry drafted Randolph Keyes and signed free agent center Tree Rollins of Atlanta. He also acquired Darnell Valentine in a deal with the Miami Heat.

Embry has moved a lot of players in two and a half years but he has come up with a team chemistry that has dominated the NBA during the first half of the season. And knowing Wayne, every one of his many moves was well calculated.

Strangely, Embry might never have gotten into basketball management if it

were not for the Boston politicians. After closing out his playing career in 1968-69 with the Milwaukee Bucks, Embry settled in Boston where he was Recreation Director for the city.

There was a move to name Embry Director of the Boston Parks Department but it was submarined even though he had built a great reputation during his short stint as Recreation Director.

Disappointed, Embry was named general manager of the Bucks in 1972—becoming the first black hired in an NBA managerial position. Just prior to being named general manager, Embry negotiated a deal that brought Oscar Robertson to the Bucks and resulted in the franchise's only NBA Championship in 1971-72.

As general manager of the Bucks, Embry negotiated the blockbuster trade that sent Kareem Abdul-Jabbar to the Los Angeles Lakers in 1975.

Jabbar was unhappy and wanted to be traded to a "big city" team and Embry felt it was time to make some changes and acquire some young blood for the Bucks. Milwaukee's small arena could not afford the salary demands of Jabbar at the time.

The trade was a shocker even though everyone was aware of Jabbar's uncomfotableness with Milwaukee's culture. Among the players acquired by the Bucks in the trade was Brian Winters, who was a top scoring guard for several years. Winters is now an assistant coach with the Cavaliers.

Embry also gave Don Nelson his first coaching job during his tenure as general manager of the Bucks. Embry and Nelson were teammates with the Celtics for two seasons—1966-67 and 1967-68. The Celtics won the title in Wayne's second year with the club.

After six years as general manager, Embry stepped down from the position and served the Bucks as a consultant through 1985. He was a basketball consultant to the Indiana Pacers during the 1985-86 season.

Embry is a class act who knows how to put together class teams.

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- the Boston Celtics 1987-88 highlight videotape.
- Kodak film.

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Entry Rules

1. The contest is open to amateur photographers only.
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4. Photographs must have a sports-oriented theme. They do not necessarily have to be basketball related.
5. Entries should be accompanied by one 3 x 5 index card on which the following information should be legibly written:
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6. The same information should be clearly written on the back of each print and/or accompanied with each slide.
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8. Entries will not be accepted after March 15, 1989.
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13. Employees and families of Eastman Kodak and CELTICS PRIDE are ineligible.
14. Kodak and CELTICS PRIDE are not responsible for transportation to or from games which monthly contest winners will be photographing.

DAY BY DAY

DECEMBER 28

McHale and DJ to Dallas? In a report published in both *The Boston Herald* and *The New York Post* (where it gravitated into startling block-sized headlines), there apparently were discussions between the Celtics and the Dallas Mavericks about trading Kevin McHale from Boston to Dallas, in exchange for Sam Perkins, Detlef Schrempf and a Dallas first-round draft choice in either 1990 or 1991. Dallas has the rights to Washington's first-rounder in 1990 and to Indiana's in 1991.

Reportedly, the inclusion of the first rounders entered into the discussions when the possibility of Johnson also being swapped was bandied about.

Practically all of the writing done in Boston on the rumored trade was by *The Herald's* Steve Bulpitt. As a result, the rival Boston Globe elicited a response from General Manager Jan Volk concerning the trade discussions.

"Kevin McHale is not on the trading block, nor has been offered anywhere. Period," stated Volk on December 27th from Boston. The Globe also reported that two GMs in the league confirmed that McHale's name has been discussed in possible trades.

"That certainly didn't come from me," said Volk.

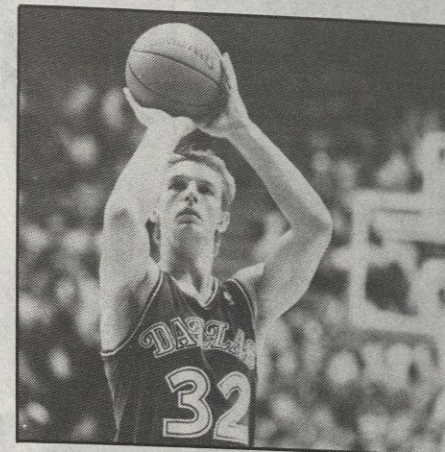
After the conclusion of last season's playoffs and the disappointing six-game defeat in the playoffs to the Detroit Pistons, talk was loosely circulated in the media that if the Celtics were to make any type of dramatic move to change their approach, their most marketable player was McHale. The thinking then was that Larry Bird was an untouchable, Dennis Johnson and Danny Ainge probably wouldn't command that much in return (being guards) and that Robert Parish's age (35) decreased his value. According to Bulpitt, Red Auerbach moved in to nix the deal with Dallas after the talk had apparently reached the naming stage.

Sam Perkins was the fourth player taken in the 1984 draft and at the time was thought to be one of the best rookies to come into the league in a long time. Although the 27-year old 6'9" forward has played better in each season (16 ppg this season), he hasn't met that lofty prognosis yet.

Detlef Schrempf, also 6'9" was the eighth player taken in the 1985 draft and has come off the bench in each of his three seasons in the league. McHale has been All-Pro and has also earned All-Defensive First Team honors the past three seasons. In addition, of course, McHale has played a key role in three championships in Boston. The latter accomplishments were important in Dallas's view.

"Kevin McHale would have provided a critical ingredient for our team," commented a Dallas source in the *Herald*. He'd give us a leadership presence and he could help us at center, too." According to Bulpitt's December 28th story, the Dallas official also said, "Their trade talk never got serious to the point where they had a meeting about it."

"I don't think you can read anything serious into most of the talk commented a Celtic source to Bulpitt. "I just think that when the team going through a rough stretch there was a tendency to do a lot of talking around here."



Detlef Schrempf: Subject of Rumors

Johnson's name entered into the discussions late when the draft choice possibility also became a facet of the trade. Although the trade was apparently never close to consummation, the fact that such discussions reached the thinking stage represents again that the Celtics are presently in a transition phase. With age slowly creeping in, management has to reflect on at least the possibility of trading players while they still have a reputation, and market value.

JANUARY 3

For the Record. The Celtics' failure to hold on to a 17-point lead in their 109-107 overtime loss to the New York Knicks January 3rd was what Jimmy Rodgers was most concerned about for the record last week. But the Celtics' mentor had to have been steaming about the last-second call made on Kevin McHale which deprived the C's of a last shot at tying the game.

McHale was called for an off-the-ball moving pick by referee Ken Mauer. This turnover prevented the Celtics from attempting the tying attempt.

Rodgers was ejected from his first game as a head coach when he was thrown out of the game against the Cleveland Cavs in Boston, December 21st. At that time, Rodgers's only statement that he thought the discrepancy of fouls called against Cleveland and against Boston was far too great.

The NBA has gone to a three-man refereeing team this year and according to an NBA official, the results to this point have been regarded as favorable.

"We'll take a look at it at length when the season is over. The biggest question in terms of the product was how an extra referee's influence might affect the number of fouls called and thus make the games too long. But to this point, there have been, on the average, only one or two more fouls called per game. That hasn't affected the game dramatically. Otherwise, the reception (to the third referee) has been generally good. Players know they can't get away with fouls away from the ball which was a major concern when we brought the third ref in. In turn we feel that has prevented potential fights: Players are less likely to retaliate for fouls if they know the action is being watched by another official. And it's changed the way the game is being watched by the teams, too. Before if there was a complaint, coaches or players might have blamed one referee. Now there's a trend of watching referee teams. How did the referee unit manage the game?"

Is there a tendency for a young referee

such as Mauer? to make a courageous call to prove that he has the strength to make a difficult call? "Just the opposite," commented the NBA man. "There's more of a tendency, in my view, for the newer referee to allow the senior official to make the tough call. And to me, that's not a plus for the newer refs. Those guys may be new to the league, but they're still veteran referees."

Meanwhile, the Celtics' road woes continued. Their road mark sunk to 3-10 after the Madison Square Garden defeat to the Knicks.

JANUARY 4

Action and Reaction. The Celtics appeared to be safely out of danger. They had trailed the Phoenix Suns by an eleven point margin, 48-37 in the second quarter but had battled back behind a unit of Kevin McHale-Brad Lohaus-Ron Grandison-Brian Shaw-and Jim Paxson to take a 99-92 lead late in the 4th quarter. But with a little over two minutes remaining in the game, the Suns, a surprising contender in the NBA West, took over. Behind Tom Chambers (33 points) and the late shooting of Eddie Johnson, Phoenix outscored Boston, 14-5 to win, 106-104.

The reaction afterward in the Suns' locker room was understandably euphoric. "You are never confident when you come into the Boston Garden as a visiting player," commented Chambers, a wealthy man after signing a lucrative contract as an unrestricted veteran free agent last summer. "You have to remember, we are a very young team and we haven't tasted success. I know the first three shots I took were bricks. But then we pulled ourselves together."

"Tom has made all the difference in the world to our team," commented off-guard, Jeff Hornacek. "He knows how to win. It's that simple and what that attitude has done is made the rest of us more confident that we can win too. And he's the 'go-to' guy we were sorely lacking last year. How do you win games in the NBA? Well, partly it's by getting calls at the end of games. Tom's like Larry (Bird) in that respect. He goes down in the trenches late and gets fouled. We get points and that's something we never got late in games last year."

It was another home defeat for the Celtics, whose home mark fell to 10-6 with the defeat. But Cotton Fitzsimmons, the coach again of the Suns, refused to criticize Boston.

"This is nothing like the late seventies when a team could come in here and win in Boston because the teams had no pride. The Celtics are working very hard...They reflect a great deal of pride there, despite the injury to Bird."

Meanwhile, the other end of the hall was somber, despite Cotton's well-meaning platitudes. Jimmy Rodgers scheduled an 11 am practice the following day at Hellenic College. But the team didn't work out on the floor, as the coach had an extended two-hour film session.

"Nothing to read into that," Rodgers said later. "No punishment, that is. I just thought we needed to look at things in depth. Sometimes that serves a better purpose than any."

"We had two games back-to-back. I wouldn't have worked the team hard anyway."

JANUARY 16

New Scout. The Celtics have taken various steps since the end of last season to revamp their scouting staff. This set of actions became necessary when, last June, former Head Scout Ed Badger resigned his position to take the Assistant Coach slot with the expansion Charlotte Hornets. Badger had been the key figure in scouting on the national level.

Several moves have been made by Executive Vice President and General Manager Jan Volk. K.C. Jones moved up from Head Coach to Vice President of Basketball Operations. Fordy Anderson took over Badger's position and Rick Weitzman has been hired full-time to scout both on the New England regional level and on the national level as well.

Now on the strong recommendation of Jones, Ducky Meade, a coach in New Hampshire, has been added to the staff as a part-time scout. He will work mostly throughout the New England area, scouting Division I, II and III. Last week Meade scouted the Villanova upset over previously unbeaten Providence College at the Providence Civic Center.

"I can't say enough good words about Ducky," commented Jones. "He is a master at coaching defense and I've employed several of his drills both at the rookie camps I've run for the Celtics well as for the veterans. He has a great idea about the game, has a strong commitment to players playing to their fullest potential and needless to say, his understanding of the defensive approach is outstanding."

Among Meade's theories: Breaking down the defensive half of the court into eight areas, where the offensive team is most vulnerable to being trapped in a double-team.

"I can't say how happy I am," commented Meade, who coached collegiately at St. Anselm's College in NH and in the New Hampshire system in Hudson. "The players at this level are exceptionally gifted. The challenge for coaches and scouts is to implement a system that will make it as easy as possible to play together."

"I patterned a lot of my thinking after Bobby Knight, the coach of the Indiana University basketball team. He has a genuine teaching philosophy that ensures the players work to their potential. That's why you see a player like Quinn Buckner excel, even if he didn't have the ability of an Isiah Thomas, who also played for Bobby. But they both won championships and they both won them in the team context."

Meade is still continuing to teach in Hudson, but will work closely with Jones and the entire staff.

Meade formerly worked under Red Auerbach when the Celtics Rookie Camp was held in Marshfield. When the camp moved to Brandeis University three years ago, Meade's commitments became too extensive and he committed.

"I'm amazed at how Ducky is able to see the game," concluded Jones. "He has ideas about peripheral vision that really give the advantage to the defense."

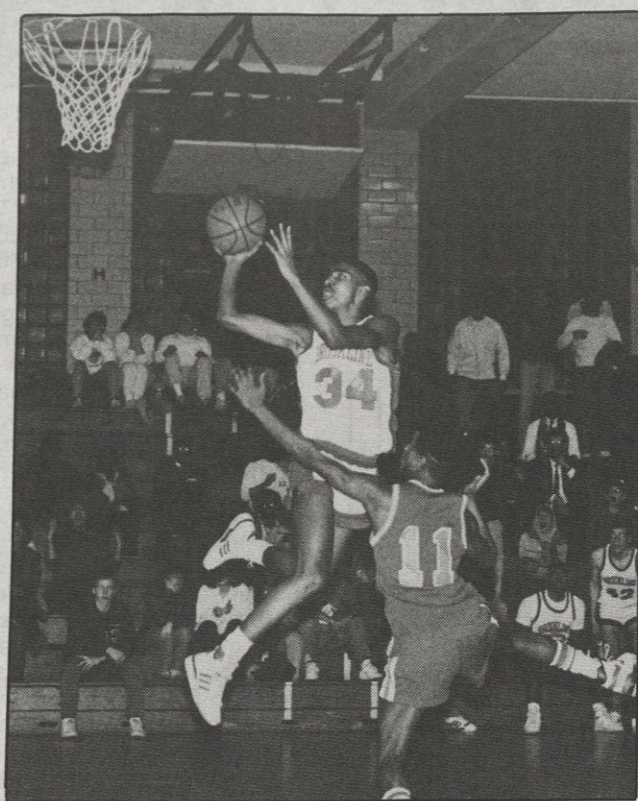
"I think the Celtics' trapping game is very good," offered Meade from courtside last week. "They have all-out desire, and that's what's required to make any press work."



Kodak/Celtics Pride Photo Contest Winners



1st Place



2nd Place



3rd Place

Pictured above are the first, second and third place finishers in this month's Kodak/CELTICS PRIDE Photo Contest. First place was awarded to Mike Conner of Acton, MA.

For his efforts, Mike will be receiving several exciting prizes including a Kodak K-12 35mm camera, and the opportunity to sit courtside and photograph a Celtics game in Boston Garden. Second and third place were awarded

to Harry Mattison of Brookline, MA and David Silverman of Cranston, RI, respectively. For details on how you can be a winner, please consult contest details on page 20.

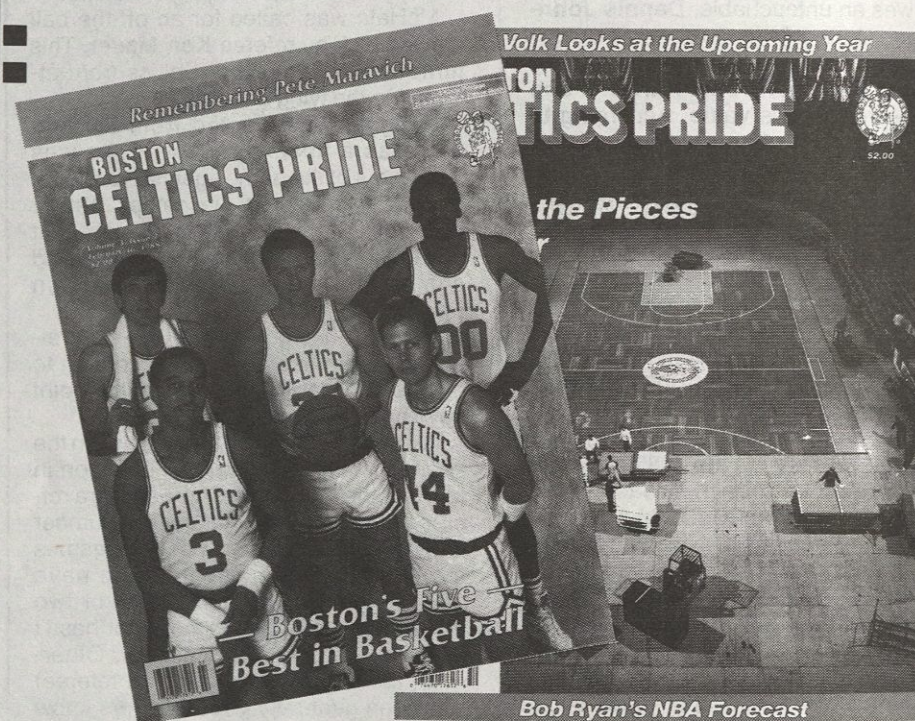
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Looking for a Role

Jim Paxson Strives to Contribute Every Night

Like his professional model John Havlicek, Jim Paxson embodies the techniques of his game that have made him a successful player in the National Basketball Association for ten seasons.

Paxson accomplished many feats during this span. He had 41 points against Chicago in 1984; earlier he shot 15-17 from the floor en route to a 40 point performance against the Houston Rockets in 1982 (*Celtics Pride*, March, 1988). These scoring fireworks were turned in while Paxson played for Dr. Jack Ramsay and the Portland Trail Blazers, where Jim played for nine seasons before being traded to the Celtics last February in exchange for Jerry Sichting. Paxson was an All-Star (two times), he had size (6'5 1/2") and he had the obvious tenacity of a winning ball player. Little wonder why Jimmy Rodgers, Jan Volk and K.C. Jones wanted the veteran.

Paxson at the time of the trade reworked his contract in order to fit his salary into the limiting confines of the Celtics' salary cap. But even at the cost of deferred payment, the choice for Paxson was clear. "This is an opportunity to play on a champion," commented Paxson. "The Celtics are respected throughout the league for their ability to play a team game and being very successful at it."

As the 1988-89 season entered mid-January, Paxson, after a strong start, was trying to play his way out of a tailspin. Originally Rodgers' choice to replace Larry Bird when the latter went out with his injured heels in November, the Dayton graduate responded well. Running his deft patterns in the Celtics' motion offense with a remarkable similarity to Havlicek, Paxson averaged 12.6 ppg, shooting .517 in 33.4 minutes. In the initial aftershocks of the realization that Bird would be missing for the heart of the regular season, Paxson was a vital stabilizing force. But his size would eventually work against him at the small forward spot. The Celtics eventually went to a bigger lineup and brought Brad Lohaus into Paxson's place. Paxson, with the wisdom of the veteran, wasn't particularly bothered with Coach Rodgers' decision on a personal level. But in a sea of continual change this season, eventually Paxson's game began to suffer. Soon, Lohaus would also be replaced, this time by the impressive second-year player, Reggie Lewis. Paxson was undergoing several transformations in the span of a three month period: From backup small forward to starting in that spot. Then, back to reserve in the frontcourt until he recently landed at reserve off-guard.

"I've slumped some," Paxson candidly said, "but I have no complaints about the moving around. I've had my minutes and I've had my opportunities. Jimmy's stayed with me and I'm confident it'll change." Paxson's numbers over a recent stretch were 7.3 ppg through games of January 6th, and included in this time frame was a season-low 11 minutes against New York, January 3rd.

"The major thing you're aiming at coming off the bench is consistency. I have to play better than I'm playing right now (to get more minutes). I feel very positive about Jimmy's decision to move Reggie into the starting lineup because it has both Brad and I in spots where we can contribute best. Brad's backing up both forward

spots and I'm playing behind Danny (Ainge). It has cut my minutes because Danny's playing 35-36 minutes a game."

Paxson contributes meaningfully to the team, even if he isn't producing actual points, because his constant motion on offense and his considerable court awareness ensure the team concept being intact. But when a player isn't placing the numbers on the board, it's convenient for that player to think of himself as being in a slump.

"I think my play is still solid. But coming off the bench is tricky, it's an art of sorts. Like against Charlotte, I played in the first half and shot 3 for 3 and earned more min-

utes in the second half. But then I came in and had several open shots, but only shot 2-for-8."

"I've been here for a year and I think I've proven to the coaching staff that I'm a better defensive player than they first thought, and that I am a good shooter. I have to believe that these general impressions take precedence over a six or seven game slump. It's something that I just have to pull myself through."

"The lineup change has done something else, too, and that's brought Ron Grandison into the lineup more often. He may not always come up with a lot of statistics, but I believe teams around the

league are beginning to notice what we've seen from him in practice all year: When teams in practice have Ronnie on their side, they usually win, because he always hustles."

"I believe there are a couple of trends happening to us right now. We've been losing (five of seven in late December-early January) but the short term changes are beginning to work out. They take time, that's all. The quality of this team is that even though we've been struggling, not once has there been any fingerpointing, and that's exemplary. We're still having fun and I respect every single player in this locker room."

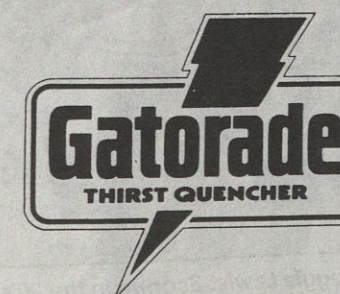
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BY THE NUMBERS

Celtics Road Woes Continue

The Celtics' road travails continued during the holidays when they dropped three of four. The Celtics' longest winning streak on the road this season: 1. Their longest losing string: 5. The Celtics yielded 108.3 ppg on the road while scoring 102 ppg in the visitor role. Through games of January 9th the Celtics were involved in 11 back-to-back game situations. Boston's home record in these games was no better than .500 (4-4). Since none of the back-to-back situations involved consecutive games played at the Boston Garden, the road affected the team even in the friendly confines of the parquet.

Kevin McHale. McHale averaged 24 ppg during the five game stretch between December 27th-Jan 4th. Three double-figure rebounding games including high of 11 (with 17 points) against NY. Had 27 points, 10 rebounds and 3 blocks against Phoenix in 41 minutes McHale is averaging 15.1 FGA per contest this season compared to 12.57 shots attempted career. McHale's response on the floor during trade rumors. His verbal response, "There's nothing I can do about (the rumors). I want to stay in Boston, though."

Reggie Lewis. Lewis moved into the starting lineup at the small forward in San Antonio and proceeded to foul out during 10 point-1 rebound game. He immediately righted himself in New York however with 28 points in 39 minutes. Lewis shot 8-8 from the free throw line which has been Achilles heel for the youngster (.687) this season. Also, 39 minutes in NY represented career high. Had 18 points, 4 assists, 3 rebounds, 1 steal and block Team was 1-4 through Jan 4th in games that Lewis started. Stats as starter: (Average) 33 min, 16.6 ppg, 3 rebs, 1.2 assists. Overall averaging 12.4 ppg.

Robert Parish. Elsewhere in this issue,



Danny Ainge: Assists are up

the claim is made that Parish will make All-Star Team but Globe's Bob Ryan refutes this argument, stating that Moses Malone will be taken and Brad Daugherty will also be chosen because of Cleveland's fine season. However, Parish continues to be one of the best players in the league this year. Had second 34 point night, this one against Spurs (13-17

FGs). Had season high 12 off. rebounds contributing to total of 19. Added 19 points-14 rebounds before fouling against Ewing and NY. Had 15 points and 12 rebounds against Suns but appeared fatigued in second of back-to-back contests. Then injured knee in that game. Moved up to 2nd in NBA in FG% at .576; 3rd in Reb: 12.3

Dennis Johnson. Dramatic three-point FG sent game at NY into OT: season high 40 min and season high 9 rebounds to go with 9 pts. Had 11 points with 6 rebounds in SA and directed game-winning 4th quarter rally for week's singular road victory. Had 10 points and 10 assists in 26 minutes against Phoenix. Has 10.1 as-

sists per game in 48 minute projections.

Danny Ainge. Ainge averaged 15.2 ppg on 40.5 shooting. Ainge had 4.4 assists in this span and 5-16 in three pt. FG shooting. In stretch that Celtics arguably played their best ball of the season, Dec. 14-21, Ainge averaged 23.2 ppg on 53% FG shooting and this output came directly after the Brigham Young star connected on career high 45 vs. PH on 12/9. Ainge also had 6.5 assists in this span. Ainge's best game on road was in NY: 16 pts, 8 ast and 6 rebounds with 3 steals.

Brian Shaw. Shaw's best contest was against the Suns back home in the Garden when he sparked third-fourth quarter near-game-deciding rally: 4-4 FGs, 7 ast, 3 rebs and block. Through 28 games: 7.8 ppg, 5.4 assists, 3.7 rebs, 25 steals. The twenty-eight games compare favorably with the thirty he played in his senior season at UCSB: 13.3 ppg, 6.3 assists, 8.6 rebs. Shaw's best game in scoring column in recent road trip: against Denver, he had 21 points on 10 of 17 from field.

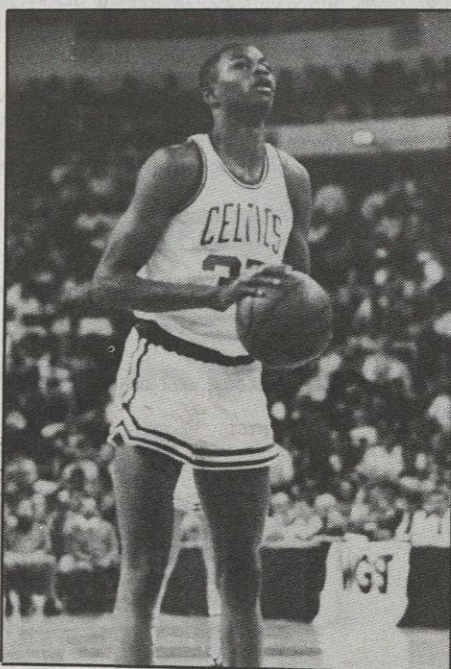
Jim Paxson. Turned in one of best 3-11 FGs-9 pt. game this season in 106-104 defeat to Phoenix Teamed with McHale-Lohaus-Shaw and Grandison to turn 72-73 deficit into 99-92 lead but team failed to hold on. Averaged 5.2 ppg in five games and 15.15 minutes. In five starts at small forward immediately after Bird's absence began team was 3-2. Paxson averaged 12.6 ppg in 33.4 minutes on 51.7 FG% with 15 assists and 10 rebounds. Team's unsettled situation at small forward has affected Paxson's playing time but best spot seems to be guard.

Brad Lohaus. Lewis replaced Lohaus in starting lineup against San Antonio on Dec. 30th. Lohaus took some time before responding but played spectacularly in eight minute stint against Phoenix at Garden (from where the game was beamed back to his hometown): 8 pts (4-6 FGs), 4 rebounds, 1 steal and 1 block and on first two plays he was in game for, he blocked shot and then on offensive end, nailed jumper. Record of team with Lohaus starter: 7-8. Tall small forward's numbers: (Average): 22 minutes, 7.7 ppg on .427 FG%, 3 rebounds and 2 assists.

Ron Grandison. After he appeared to be settling in for winter's hibernation, he was brought back to rotation by Birdless Coach Rodgers. Three effective performances. Was first reserve in game against Spurs: 21 minutes, 3-9 FGs, 8 points, 3 rebounds, 3 assists and 2 steals. Added 4 points, 3 rebounds and steal in 13 minutes against Knicks and back home against Phoenix, helped key pressing team rally: In 25 minutes, 2 points, 5 rebounds, 3 assists. With enough minutes, Grandison will likely continue to contribute rebounds assists and steals.

Ramon Rivas. Time limited during team's late December-early January slump (five losses in six contests). Played 8 minutes against Denver and scored 2 points and registered 2 steals. One minute in both Dallas and SA with one assist against Spurs.

Kevin Gamble. Played 8 minutes against Nuggets and was active with 3 points, 1 assist, 1-2 from Ft. line. Had 1-2 FT against Spurs. Coach Rodgers's recent use of Grandison seems to hamper Gamble's possibility or remaining on roster when superstar Bird returns.



Reggie Lewis: Scoring in the 30's

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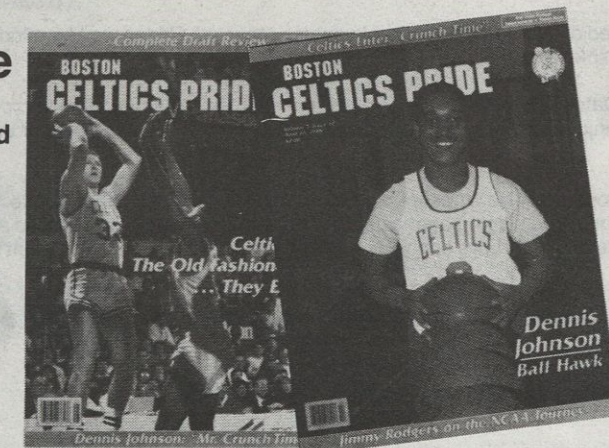
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An Artist in the Family

Paintings of Donna Johnson Exhibited at School of Fine Arts

By Eddie Gillooly

There's another D.J. on the verge of emerging into the spotlight. This D.J. (Donna Johnson), the attractive wife of Celtics star Dennis Johnson, is bursting with talent but unlike her husband who orchestrates the Celtics offense on the parquet floor, Donna's creativity is on canvas.

Donna has been studying art at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts for the past year and is rapidly gaining respect and admiration among her peers and fellow students for the many works she has completed.

As a result of her blossoming talent, several of Donna's pastel paintings will be on display at a Black Student exhibit sponsored by the School of Fine Arts in celebration of Black History month, between February 15 and March 3.

"I've always enjoyed drawing and when we moved to Lexington a few years ago, I began attending art classes under the di-

creativity."

Even though she's always had a talent for drawing, Donna says she was never too involved in her high school art classes because she was more into cartooning at that time.

"Painting is very relaxing because it allows a person to express their feelings on canvas," Donna stated while displaying, somewhat reluctantly, some of her early paintings. "There is a style one develops that depicts an artists' sensitivity and emotions."

Donna is not all that surprised she possesses a special talent with a brush. "I think I inherited my father's creativity. He was extremely creative as a furniture maker."

One of Donna's favorites in this early stage of a promising career is a spellbinding portrait of a mother holding a child and it will be among her selections in the School of Fine Arts exhibit.

Another pastel favorite Donna is planning for the exhibit is a landscape painting with a waterfall background that would be a masterpiece in any living room.



Donna Johnson: Talented, with a Unique Style

rection of Janet Monagu," said the stylish Donna who was a fashion model in California and Arizona after graduating from the John Powers School of Modeling.

"It was the first time I ever had any formal training in art," she explained. "I used to do cartoons and for a while I thought about that field as a career but it was difficult finding a writer to collaborate on the material."

"I've tried a lot of different things in my lifetime but I've never enjoyed anything more than what I am doing now," she continued. "That's why I decided to make a commitment and attend the Museum of Fine Arts on a full-time basis."

"While I do the majority of my painting at home, I'm learning the techniques in school," she added. "The instructors give you a free hand and you are able to learn so many different things about painting which you can incorporate into your own

After reviewing the more than 50 paintings in her workshop in her home, even a novice is able to see the vast improvement from one painting to the next. The detail and color have a uniqueness. Each painting depicts a certain intensity.

Donna's current painting is beginning to take shape now and already the expressions are priceless and moving. It is another mother and daughter close-up and it was inspired from a scene in the television movie "The Burning Bed".

Donna, who attends art classes from 9 to 5 everyday and paints in her workshop whenever she has a free moment, said her ultimate goal is to open a gallery that will feature the works of young artists.

At the pace she is developing as an artist now, there might not be any room in the gallery for paintings other than the works of Donna Johnson. She is talented and has a very unique style.



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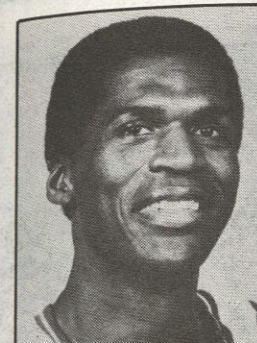
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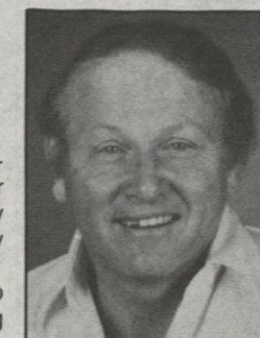


Robert Parish

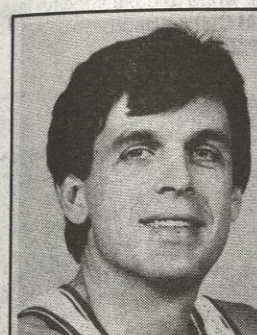
Robert Parish on the surprisingly difficult game on the Celtics' recent three-game road trip West: "Believe it or not, San Antonio's always been the toughest stop, simply because it's the last stop. We always seem to have good battles with them. People always say they're playing poorly, but they always play a lot better than people seem to think when they play us. They're probably sitting there waiting for us when we get there. All pumped up."

Richie Adubato, Mavericks' assistant coach, describes the Boston Celtics as an opponent without Larry Bird: "Initially, the loss of Bird was devastating for them. Their whole offense was geared around him. He made all the passes and set up everybody with the pick and roll. They are not a great club, because they don't have him. But they are still a good club."

"Naturally, you worry less when they don't have Bird. They still have four guys who can beat you, but what we don't have to worry about is the memory of Bird dribbling downcourt like he did last season, knowing his team needed two (points) to tie and then passing that up to go for three and the win. He usually will not let his team lose."



Richie Adubato

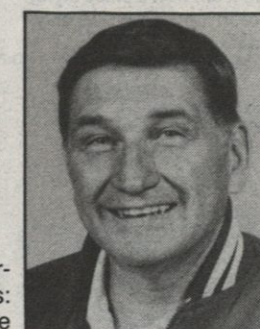


Kevin McHale

Kevin McHale on the Celtics' best stretch of basketball of the season, their streak of three straight victories over Utah, the Lakers and the New York Knicks: "You gotta have fun. That's one of the main things this team has been lacking. We've been learning so much and trying to do so much, that we've lost track of the fact that you can play this game and enjoy it."

"I went home after the Utah game and sat around my house and thought, 'You know, this is a great sport if you allow it to be.'"

Ed Badger, formerly the Celtics' head scout and now the assistant coach of the Charlotte Hornets, on the difference between coaching in college and coaching in the pros: "In college, when I called a timeout, at least I knew I was the highest paid guy in the huddle."

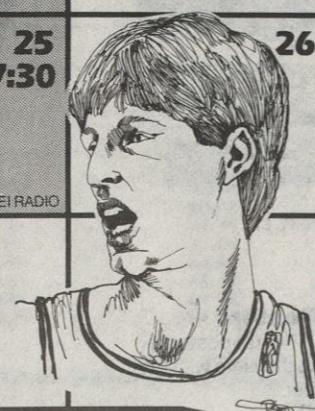


Ed Badger

BOSTON CELTICS JANUARY, 1989

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3 NEW YORK KNICKS 8:00 TV-56 WEEI RADIO	4 PHOENIX SUNS 7:30 SPORTS CHANNEL WEEI RADIO	5	6 CHARLOTTE HORNETS 7:30 SPORTS CHANNEL WEEI RADIO	7
8	9 LOS ANGELES CLIPPERS 7:30 WEEI RADIO	10	11 INDIANA PACERS 7:30 SPORTS CHANNEL	12 NEW JERSEY NETS 7:30	13	14
15 CHICAGO BULLS 3:30 TV-56 WEEI RADIO	16 DETROIT PISTONS 7:30 TV-56 WEEI RADIO	17	18 PHILADELPHIA 76ers 7:30 TV-56 WEEI RADIO	19	20 PHILADELPHIA 76ers 7:30 SPORTS CHANNEL WEEI RADIO	21
22 DETROIT PISTONS NOON WEEI RADIO	23	24	25 INDIANA PACERS 7:30 TV-56 WEEI RADIO	26	27 SACRAMENTO KINGS 7:30 SPORTS CHANNEL WEEI RADIO	28
29 MIAMI HEAT 3:30 WEEI RADIO	30	31 WASHINGTON BULLETS 7:30 TV-56 WEEI RADIO				



JANUARY 31, 1989

MATCHING UP

The 1966 Celtics vs. the 1977 Trail Blazers

It requires a feat of imagination to regard the key players of this matchup — Bill Russell of Boston and Bill Walton of Portland — without the bold black signatures of their respective athletic careers.

With Russell of course, the evaluation need go no further than his career numbers. Behind Russell's sterling athletic ability, the Celtics won eleven championships in thirteen seasons. After the eleventh and final title, Russell walked away from the game with barely a wave goodbye.

The keynote moment of Walton's career however, was based on misfortune, a stark irony for a man who adheres the ideal of the game with such passion. A passion that induced him (blind to the consequences) to take a pain-killing shot during the 1978 NBA playoffs in order to neutralize the pain of a broken foot. Against Dennis Johnson and the Seattle SuperSonics, the pressure the 230 pound Walton put on his foot forced it to crack severely. That single event superseded his treasured 1977 and 1986 championships in the NBA.

Seasons. The 1966 Celtics were shooting for an unprecedented eighth consecutive championship but through the year, their quest seemed unlikely to be fulfilled. Wilt Chamberlain was playing the best ball of his career (33.5 ppg, 24.6 rpg, 5.2 assists); and he was playing team ball with a superlative supporting cast that included Hal Greer, Wally Jones, Chet Walker, Luke Jackson and Bill Cunningham. The Celtics had Russell (12.9 ppg, 22.8 rpg), John Havlicek, Sam Jones, Tom Sanders and K.C. Jones. They and the Sixers battled for first place in the East all season. With it went the best record in the league and the home-court advantage for the playoffs. Until that year Boston had won the regular season title each year of its string of titles but in a critical back-to-back series over an early March weekend, Philadelphia prevailed in both the Convention Center and the Boston Garden.

Remarkably each team won the rest of their games till the end of the season. But Philadelphia had their first division title. (A memorable photo in George Sullivan's *Picture History of the Boston Celtics* depicts the abject disappointment on the Celtics' bench).

Yet this loss only set up the 76ers for the fall as once again the Celtics rose up. In the showdown of the post season, Sam Jones, Havlicek and Russell starred as Boston won the opener in Philly, 115-96. It paved the way for a five game victory and the inevitable NBA championship.

Portland's one season surge to the title was similar to the Celtics championship eleven years before. Walton (18.6 ppg, 14.4 rpg, 3.25 blocks) was healthy for the first time in his professional career and performed with deep resolve throughout the entire eighty-two game schedule and post-season.

Like the Celtics of 1966, Portland finished second in their conference but in the playoffs, the Blazers (Maurice Lucas, Bobby Gross, Lionel Hollins, Dave Twardzik, Johnny Davis, Lloyd Neal) ignited. They swept the Lakers as Walton controlled Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and in The



K.C. Jones: Veteran Leadership Would Pay Dividends

Finals, the Blazers delivered once again. This series featured the glamor matchup between Walton and Doctor J. The Sixers won the opening two games in the Spectrum but Portland swept the final four. In the critical 5th game Walton burned George McGinnis, Darryl Dawkins, Caldwell Jones and Harvey Catchings with 25 points, 24 rebounds and a virtual one man road win.

Style and Match-ups. One style described the two teams: Classic textbook fast-break basketball. Russell's defensive prowess in the rebounding and shot-blocking categories repeatedly set up K.C. Jones and Havlicek at the point and the C's delivered repeated fast-break baskets. Walton, an admitted student of Russell's while growing up in San Diego, mirrored the Celtics style. "We were

helped considerably because Johnny Davis was so fast. And Hollins was a fine ballhandler. I'd get the ball off the board and we'd be gone!" Another weapon in Walton's arsenal: The outlet pass to half-court while still airborne (retrieving the ball off the defensive board and pitching it out to the point man, all in one motion).

Matchups: Hollins on K.C. Jones. Davis/Twardzik on Sam Jones. Russell on Walton. Gross on Havlicek. Sanders/Don Nelson on Maurice Lucas.

Hidden Factors. At times, coaching appears best when unnoticed allowing the players to play their best. Style and skill is frequently the best solution to the problem of winning a championship at the professional level. But not here. Red Auerbach retired first in all-time victories with 938 and Dr. Jack Ramsay, finally fa-

tigued with the problem of motivating the young athlete of the eighties, gave it up this season second on the list with 866 wins.

In addition to these men's coaching genius, they also had that hidden element special to both teams: Auerbach announced before the season began that it would be his final year of coaching. He sealed the title win by announcing Russell as his successor during the 1966 Finals.

Ramsay was the first coach at the professional level to elicit Walton's best play. The relationship between the "professional's professional," Ramsay and the graceful yet fiery Walton was special, and it led to the championship.

Outcome. The Celtics scored 112.7 per game and allowed 107.8. Portland scored 111.7 and yielded 106.2, remarkably similar over the ten year span. The Celtics defended with more team intensity (Russell-K.C. Jones-Sanders) and Portland ran the superior halfcourt motion offense, and Walton's superb passing.

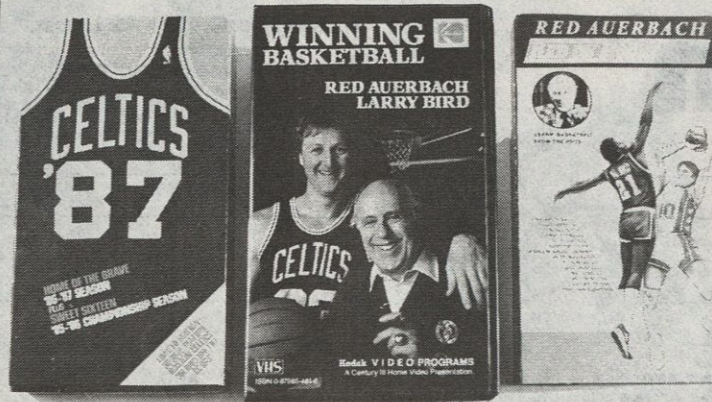
The Celtics had the homecourt advantage with a 54-26 mark compared to the Blazers' 49-33 mark. Because of this, the Celtics are favored to win.

If ever there were a series for those with an affinity to dream about "The Perfect Basketball Game," isn't this the one? Which team does one really favor when talent and "heart" were so equal? When the Celtics won their '66 title, they were middle-aged unit. They were an ideal blend of talent and experience, saavy and skill. Yet Portland had the talent and allure of the young, a team sparked by Walton with an average age of approximately 26 years of age. One might have predicted a Celtic win here with some confidence because they had the special incentive to win for Auerbach.

But Walton's tragic fall one year later seems, in retrospect, to have fated the 1977 championship for Portland. A superior act of will resurrected Walton's career for one more glory season in Boston in 1986, an irony for the man who seemed destined to play out his career in the shadow.

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